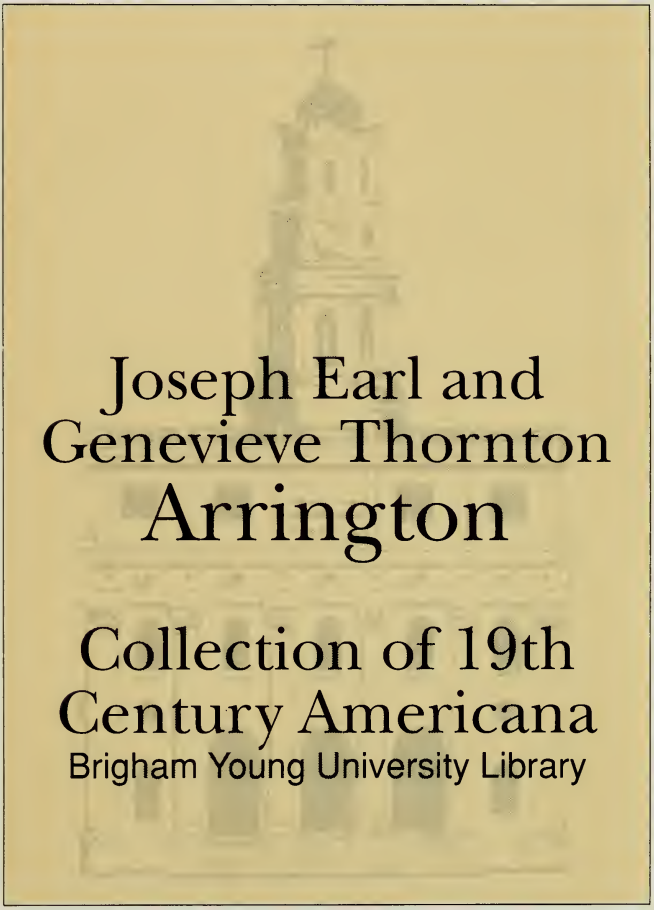
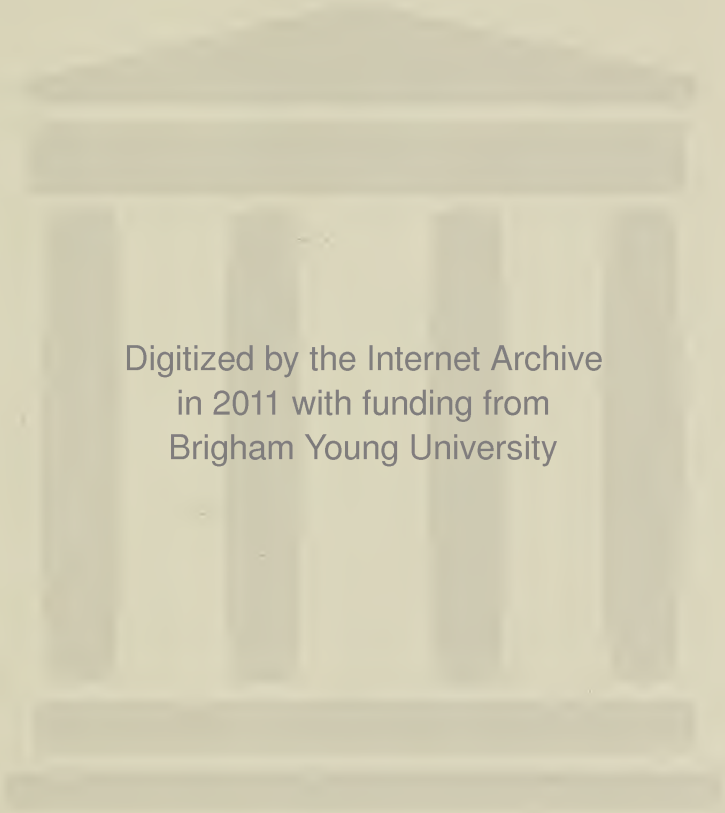

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LETTERS

OF

JOHN ADAMS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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1841
Vol. 2

LETTERS

OF

JOHN ADAMS,

ADDRESSED TO HIS WIFE.

EDITED BY HIS GRANDSON,

CHARLES FRANCIS ADAMS.

VOLUME II.

BOSTON:
CHARLES C. LITTLE AND JAMES BROWN.
MDCCCXLI.

Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1841, by
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LETTERS.

LETTERS.

LETTER CXLI.

Philadelphia, Monday, 8 September, 1777.

MY DEAR,

THERE has been a very general apprehension during the last week, that a general action would happen as on yesterday, but we hear of none. Our army is encamped between Newport and White Clay Creek, on advantageous ground. The General has harangued his army, and published in general orders, in order to prepare their minds for something great, and has held up the example of Stark, Herkimer, Gansevoort and their troops to animate his officers and men with emulation. Whether he expects to be attacked, or whether he designs to offend, I can't say.

A general action which should terminate in a defeat of Howe, would be complete and final ruin to him. If it should terminate only in a drawn battle, it would be the same thing. If he should gain a victory and

maintain possession of the field, he would lose so many men killed and wounded, that he would scarcely have enough left to march to Philadelphia, surrounded as he would be with militia and the broken remains of the continental army. But if there should be no general battle, and the two armies should lounge away the remainder of the campaign in silent inactivity, gazing at each other, Howe's reputation would be ruined in his own country and in all Europe, and the dread of him would cease in all America. The American mind, which, I think, has more firmness now, than it ever had before, since this war began, would acquire a confidence and strength, that all the efforts of Great Britain afterwards would not be able to relax.

You will see by the papers enclosed that we have been obliged to attempt to humble the pride of some Jesuits, who call themselves Quakers,[1] but who love money and land better than liberty or religion. The hypocrites are endeavoring to raise the cry of persecution, and to give this matter a religious turn, but they can't succeed. The world knows them and their communications. Actuated by a land-jobbing spirit like that of William Penn, they have been so-

[1] See Journals of Congress for the 28th of August, and Gordon's History, Vol. ii. p. 505.

General Sullivan, when on an expedition to Staten Island, captured certain papers belonging to the Quakers, which were sent by him to Congress, and by that body referred to a committee of three, Mr. J. Adams, Mr. Duer, and Mr. R. H. Lee, who reported on the afternoon of the same day.

liciting grants of immense regions of land on the Ohio. American independence has disappointed them, which makes them hate it. Yet the dastards dare not avow their hatred to it, it seems.

The moments are critical here. We know not but the next will bring us an account of a general engagement begun, and when once begun, we know not how it will end, for the battle is not always to the strong. The events of war are uncertain. All that we can do is to pray, as I do most devoutly, that we may be victorious ; at least, that we may not be vanquished. But if it should be the will of Heaven that our army should be defeated, our artillery lost, our best generals killed, and Philadelphia fall into Mr. Howe's hands, still America is not conquered. America would yet be possessed of great resources, and capable of great exertions, as mankind would see. It may, for what I know be the design of Providence that this should be the case. Because it would only lay the foundations of American independence deeper, and cement them stronger. It would cure Americans of their vicious and luxurious and effeminate appetites, passions and habits, a more dangerous army to American liberty than Mr. Howe's.

However, without the loss of Philadelphia we must be brought to an entire renunciation of foreign commodities, at least of West India produce. People are coming to this resolution very fast here. Loaf sugar at four dollars a pound, wine at three dollars a bottle, &c., will soon introduce economy in the use of these articles. This spirit of economy would be more ter-

rible to Great Britain than any thing else, and it would make us more respectable in the eyes of all Europe. Instead of acrimonious altercations between town and country, and between farmer and merchant, I wish that my dear countrymen would agree in this virtuous resolution of depending on themselves alone. Let them make salt and live without sugar and rum.

I am grieved to hear of the angry contentions among you. That improvident act for limiting prices has done great injury, and in my sincere opinion, if not repealed, will ruin the State, and introduce a civil war. I know not how unpopular this sentiment may be, but it is sincerely mine. There are rascally upstarts in trade, I doubt not, who have made great fortunes in a small period, who are monopolizing and oppressing. But how this can be avoided entirely, I know not, but by disusing their goods, and letting them perish in their hands.

LETTER CXLII.

Philadelphia, 14 September, 1777.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

You will learn, from the newspapers, before this reaches you, the situation of things here. Mr. Howe's army is at Chester, about fifteen miles from this town. General Washington's is over the Schuylkill, awaiting

the flank of Mr. Howe's army. How much longer Congress will stay is uncertain. I hope we shall not move until the last necessity, that is, until it shall be rendered certain that Mr. Howe will get the city. If we should move, it will be to Reading, Lancaster, York, Easton, or Bethlehem, some town in this State. It is the determination not to leave this State. Don 't be anxious about me, nor about our great and sacred cause. It is the cause of truth and will prevail. If Howe gets the city, it will cost him all his force to keep it, and so he can get nothing else.

My love to all friends.

Yours.

LETTER CXLIII.

York Town, Pennsylvania,
Tuesday, 30 September, 1777.

MY BEST FRIEND,

It is now a long time since I had an opportunity of writing to you, and I fear you have suffered unnecessary anxiety on my account. In the morning of the 19th instant, the Congress were alarmed in their beds by a letter from Mr. Hamilton, one of General Washington's family, that the enemy was in possession of the ford over the Schuylkill and the boats, so that they had it in their power to be in Philadelphia before morning. The papers of Congress belonging to the Secretary's office, the War office, the Treasury office, &c.,

were before sent to Bristol. The President, and all the other gentlemen were gone that road, so I followed with my friend Mr. Marchant, of Rhode Island, to Trenton, in the Jerseys. We stayed at Trenton until the 21st, when we set off to Easton, upon the forks of Delaware. From Easton we went to Bethlehem, from thence to Reading, from thence to Lancaster, and from thence to this town, which is about a dozen miles over the Susquehannah river. Here Congress is to sit. In order to convey the papers with safety, which are of more importance than all the members, we were induced to take this circuit, which is near a hundred and eighty miles, whereas this town, by the direct road, is not more than eighty-eight miles from Philadelphia. This tour has given me an opportunity of seeing many parts of this country which I never saw before.

This morning Major Troup arrived here with a large packet from General Gates, containing very agreeable intelligence, which I need not repeat, as you have much earlier intelligence from that part than we have. I wish affairs here wore as pleasing an aspect. But alas, they do not.

I shall avoid every thing like history, and make no reflections. However, General Washington is in a condition tolerably respectable, and the militia are now turning out from Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania in small numbers. All the apology that can be made for this part of the world is, that Mr. Howe's march from Elk to Philadelphia, was through the very regions of passive obedience. The whole country through which he passed is inhabited by Quakers.

There is not such another body of Quakers in all America, perhaps not in all the world.

I am still of opinion that Philadelphia will be no loss to us. I am very comfortably situated here in the house of General Roberdeau, whose hospitality has taken in Mr. S. Adams, Mr. Gerry and me. My health is as good as common, and I assure you my spirits not the worse for the loss of Philadelphia. Biddle in the continental frigate, at South Carolina, has made a noble cruise and taken four very valuable prizes.

LETTER CXLIV.

Yorktown, 7 October, 1777.

I HAVE no time nor accommodation to write of late; besides, I seldom know what to write, and when I do, I don't love to write it. One thing is now becoming more and more certain every day, that is, that our people will and do fight. And although they make a clumsy hand of it, yet they do better and better.

I am lodged in the house of General Roberdeau, an Israelite indeed, I believe, who with his sisters and children and servants does every thing to make us happy. We are highly favored. No other delegates are so well off. I am as well as usual. Your dream will never come to pass. You never can be coolly

received by me while my heart beats and my senses remain.

I had no letter from you by the last post.

Yours, yours, yours.

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CXLV.

Yorktown, 15 October, 1777.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE not been able of late to keep up my correspondence with you so constantly as my heart inclined me to do. But I hope now to write you oftener; but I don 't incline to write very particularly, lest my letters should be intercepted. I am in tolerable health, but oppressed with a load of public cares. I have long foreseen that we should be brought down to a great degree of depression before the people of America would be convinced of their real danger, of the true causes of it, and be stimulated to take the necessary steps for a reformation. Government and law in the States, large taxation, and strict discipline in our armies, are the only things wanting as human means. These with the blessing of Heaven will certainly produce glory, triumph, liberty, and safety, and peace; and nothing but these will do.

I long with the utmost impatience to come home.

Don 't send a servant for me. The expense is so enormous that I cannot bear the thought of it. I will crawl home upon my little pony, and wait upon myself as well as I can. I think you had better sell my horse.

The people are universally calling for fighting and for blood. Washington is getting into the humor of fighting, and Howe begins to dread it. And well he may. Fighting will certainly answer the end, although we may be beaten every time for a great while. We have been heretofore greatly deceived concerning the numbers of militia. But there are numbers enough, if they knew how to fight, which as soon as their Generals will let them, they will learn. I am, with every tender sentiment,

Yours forevermore.

LETTER CXLVI.

Yorktown, 24 October, 1777.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

It is with shame that I recollect that I have not written you more than two or three letters these five weeks, and those very short. News I am afraid to write, because I never know, until it is too late, what is true. From last Sunday to this moment, Friday afternoon four o'clock, we have been in a state of tormenting

uncertainty concerning our affairs at the northward On Sunday, we had news from the committee of Albany through Governor Clinton and General Washington of a capitulation of Burgoyne and his whole army. To this moment we have no express from Gates nor any authentic confirmation.

Howe has drawn his army into the city, and Washington is at Germantown. Supplies will be cut off from the British army in a great measure.

I am, &c., yours forever.

We shall finish a plan of confederation in a few days.

LETTER CXLVII.

Yorktown, 25 October, 1777.

MY BEST FRIEND,

This town is a small one, not larger than Plymouth. There are in it two German churches, the one Lutheran, the other Calvinistical. The congregations are pretty numerous and their attendance upon public worship is decent. It is remarkable that the Germans, wherever they are found, are careful to maintain the public worship, which is more than can be said of the other denominations of christians, this way. There is one Church here erected by the joint contributions of

Episcopalians and Presbyterians, but the minister, who is a missionary, is confined for Toryism, so that they have had for a long time no public worship. Congress have appointed two chaplains, Mr. White and Mr. Duffield, the former of whom, an Episcopalian, is arrived, and opens Congress with prayers every day. The latter is expected every hour. Mr. Duché, I am sorry to inform you, has turned out an apostate and a traitor. Poor man! I pity his weakness and detest his wickedness.

As to news we are yet in a painful suspense about affairs at the northward, but from Philadelphia, we have accounts that are very pleasing. Commodore Hazelwood with his galleys, and Lieutenant Colonel Smith in the garrison of fort Mifflin, have behaved in a manner the most gallant and glorious. They have defended the river and the fort with a firmness and perseverance which does honor to human nature. If the news from the northward is true, Mr. Howe will scarcely venture upon winter quarters in Philadelphia. We are waiting for news from Rhode Island.

I am wearied with the life I lead, and long for the joys of my family. God grant I may enjoy it in peace. Peace is my dear delight. War has no charms for me. If I live much longer in banishment I shall scarcely know my own children. Tell my little ones, that if they will be very good, papa will come home.

LETTER CXLVIII.

Yorktown, 26 October, 1777.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Mr. Colman goes off for Boston to-morrow. I have seized a moment to congratulate you on the great and glorious success of our arms at the northward and in Delaware river. The forts at Province Island and Redbank have been defended with a magnanimity which will give our country a reputation in Europe. Colonel Greene repulsed the enemy from Redbank and took Count Donop and his aid prisoners. Colonel Smith repulsed a bold attack upon fort Mifflin, and our galleys disabled two men of war, a sixty-four and a twenty-gun ship, in such a manner, that the enemy blew them up. This comes confirmed this evening, in letters from General Washington, enclosing original letters from officers in the forts.

Congress will appoint a thanksgiving; and one cause of it ought to be, that the glory of turning the tide of arms is not immediately due to the Commander-in-chief nor to southern troops. If it had been, idolatry and adulation would have been unbounded; so excessive as to endanger our liberties, for what I know. Now, we can allow a certain citizen to be wise, virtuous and good without thinking him a deity or a saviour.[1]

[1] This is the only letter, in the large collection of Mr. Adams's private correspondence with his wife, which makes any

LETTER CXLIX.

Yorktown, 28 October, 1777.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We have been three days soaking and poaching in the heaviest rain that has been known for several years,

allusion to the position of General Washington in Congress at this time. It is very well known that the Conway cabal, in its origin exclusively a military intrigue with very base motives, obtained its greatest source of influence in Congress from the coincidence in time between the defeats of Washington at Brandywine and Germantown, and the victory of Gates over Burgoyne in the north. Mr. Adams does not appear ever to have favored that cabal, but he always looked with some apprehension upon the powers with which Washington had been invested. In a manuscript sketch of his character, drawn by Dr. Benjamin Rush, it is stated that a motion was made in Congress, on the 19th of February, 1777, to surrender to the General the power of appointing his officers, but no such motion appears on the Journal. It is more probable that the proposition was made in the course of the debate that took place on that day upon going into the election of five Major Generals, but was never put into form, and therefore was not recorded. Upon that proposition Dr. Rush reports Mr. Adams to have said these words: "There are certain principles which follow us through life, and none more certainly than the *love of the first place.* We see it in the forms in which children sit at schools. It prevails equally to the latest period of life. I am sorry to find it prevail so little in this house. I have been distressed to see some of our members disposed to idolize an image which their own hands have molten. I speak of the superstitious veneration which is paid to General Washington.

and what adds to the gloom is, the uncertainty in which we remain to this moment, concerning the fate of Gates and Burgoyne. We are out of patience. It is impossible to bear this suspense with any temper.

I am in comfortable lodgings, which is a felicity that has fallen to the lot of a very few of our members. Yet the house where I am is so thronged, that I cannot enjoy such accommodations as I wish. I cannot have a room as I used, and therefore cannot find opportunities to write as I once did.

The people of this country are chiefly Germans, who have schools in their own language, as well as prayers, psalms, and sermons, so that multitudes are born, grow up and die here, without ever learning the English. In politics they are a breed of mongrels

I honor him for his good qualities, but in this house, I feel myself his superior. In private life, I shall always acknowledge him to be mine." These sentiments were the offspring of a jealousy which had been nourished by the study of history and the observation of those examples in which it abounds, of the abuse of great powers by military chieftains. They partook of no hostility to the man. This will appear more fully by reference to the letter in this collection of the 21st of February of this year, written almost in the hour of the debate, where General Washington is particularly excepted from a censure passed upon several other officers. The same feeling which prompted the speech reappears in the present letter. Had General Washington proved to be merely on the level of ordinary military heroes, and like them, had he attempted the liberties of his country, his course would have earned for Mr. Adams a high reputation. As it turned out, it came very near implicating him, in the popular judgment, with the unworthy personal intrigues for precedence of English adventurers in the American army, whose admission into it he had disapproved.

or neutrals, and benumbed with a general torpor. If the people in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware and Jersey had the feelings and the spirit of some people that I know, Howe would be soon ensnared in a trap more fatal than that in which, as it is said, Burgoyne was taken. Howe is completely in our power, and if he is not totally ruined, it will be entirely owing to the awkwardness and indolence of this country. Fighting, however, begins to become fashionable. Colonel Greene has exhibited a glorious example in the defence of Red Bank. But this must be done by a New England man at the head of two New England regiments, Rhode Islanders. Colonel Smith, however, is a Marylander from Baltimore. He has shown another example of magnanimity which gives me the most agreeable hopes. Commodore Hazelwood, too, has behaved in a manner that exceeds all praise. This spirit will be caught by other officers, for bravery is epidemical and contagious as the plague. This army suffers much for want of blankets and shoes.

I celebrated the 25th of this month[1] in my own mind and heart much more than I shall the 30th,[2] because I think the first a more fortunate day than the last. My duty to your father and my mother, to uncles and aunts. Love to brothers and sisters; but above all, present all the affection that words can express to our dear babes.

[1] The anniversary of his marriage.

[2] His birth day.

LETTER CL.

Portsmouth,[1] (N. H.) 15 December, 1777.

MY DEAR,

I ARRIVED here last evening, in good health. This morning General Whipple made me a visit at the tavern, Tilton's, and insisted upon my taking a bed at his house, in so very affectionate and urgent a manner, that I believe I shall go to his house.

The cause comes on to-morrow before my old friend Dr. Joshua Brackett as judge of admiralty. How it will go, I know not. The captors are a numerous company, and are said to be very tenacious, and have many connexions; so that we have prejudice and influence to fear. Justice, policy and law are, I am sure, on our side.

I have had many opportunities, in the course of this journey, to observe how deeply rooted our righteous cause is in the minds of the people; and could write you many anecdotes in proof of it. But I will reserve them for private conversation. On second thoughts, why should I? One evening, as I sat in one room, I overheard a company of the common sort of people in another, conversing upon serious subjects. One of them, whom I afterwards found upon inquiry

[1] Mr. Adams went to Portsmouth at this time upon a professional engagement, believed to have been the last which he ever undertook.

to be a reputable, religious man, was more eloquent than the rest. He was upon the danger of despising and neglecting serious things, and said, "Whatever person or people made light of them, would soon find themselves terribly mistaken." At length I heard these words: "It appears to me the eternal son of God is operating powerfully against the British nation for their treating lightly serious things."

One morning I asked my landlady what I had to pay? "Nothing," she said, "I was welcome, and she hoped I would always make her house my home. And she should be happy to entertain all those gentlemen who had been raised up by Providence to be the saviours of their country." This was flattering enough to my vain heart. But it made a greater impression on me, as a proof how deeply this cause had sunk into the minds and hearts of the people.

In short, every thing I see and hear indicates the same thing.

LETTER CLI.

Uncle Quincy's,[1] half after 11 o'clock,
13 February, 1778.

DEAREST OF FRIENDS,

I HAD not been twenty minutes in this house before I

[1] Mr. Adams started upon his first voyage to Europe from Mr. Norton Quincy's house, which was near the water side, at Braintree.

had the happiness to see Captain Tucker [1] and a midshipman coming for me. We shall be soon on board, and may God prosper our voyage in every stage of it as much as at the beginning, and send to you, my dear children and all my friends, the choicest of blessings! So wishes and prays yours, with an ardor that neither absence nor any other event can abate.

JOHN ADAMS.

P. S. Johnny sends his duty to his mamma and his love to his sister and brothers. He behaves like a man.

LETTER CLII.

Passy, 12 April, 1778.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I AM so sensible of the difficulty of conveying letters safe to you, that I am afraid to write any thing more than to tell you, that after all the fatigues and dangers of my voyage and journey, I am here in health.

The reception I have met in this kingdom has been as friendly, as polite, and as respectful, as was possible. It is the universal opinion of the people here, of all ranks, that a friendship between France and America is the interest of both countries, and the late alli-

[1] Of the frigate *Boston*.

ance, so happily formed, is universally popular; so much so, that I have been told by persons of good judgment, that the government here would have been under a sort of necessity of agreeing to it, even if it had not been agreeable to themselves. The delights of France are innumerable. The politeness, the elegance, the softness, the delicacy, are extreme. In short, stern and haughty republican as I am, I cannot help loving these people for their earnest desire and assiduity to please.

It would be futile to attempt descriptions of this country, especially of Paris and Versailles. The public buildings and gardens, the paintings, sculpture, architecture, music, &c., of these cities have already filled many volumes. The richness, the magnificence and splendor are beyond all description. This magnificence is not confined to public buildings, such as churches, hospitals, schools, &c., but extends to private houses, to furniture, equipage, dress, and especially to entertainments. But what is all this to me? I receive but little pleasure in beholding all these things, because I cannot but consider them as bagatelles, introduced by time and luxury in exchange for the great qualities, and hardy, manly virtues of the human heart. I cannot help suspecting that the more elegance, the less virtue, in all times and countries. Yet I fear that even my own dear country wants the power and opportunity more than the inclination to be elegant, soft and luxurious.

All the luxury I desire in this world is the company of my dearest friend, and my children, and such

friends as they delight in, which I have sanguine hopes I shall, after a few years, enjoy in peace.

I am, with inexpressible affection,

Yours, yours,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CLIII.

Passy, 25 April, 1778.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

MONSIEUR CHAUMONT has just informed me of a vessel bound to Boston, but I am reduced to such a moment of time, that I can only inform you that I am well, and enclose a few lines from Johnny to let you know that he is so. I have ordered the things you desired to be sent you, but I will not yet say by what conveyance, for fear of accidents.

If human nature could be made happy by any thing that can please the eye, the ear, the taste, or any other sense, or passion, or fancy, this country would be the region for happiness. But if my country were at peace, I should be happier among the rocks and shades of Penn's hill; and would cheerfully exchange all the elegance, magnificence, and sublimity of Europe, for the simplicity of Braintree and Weymouth.

To tell you the truth, I admire the ladies here. Don't be jealous. They are handsome, and very

well educated. Their accomplishments are exceedingly brilliant, and their knowledge of letters and arts exceeds that of the English ladies, I believe.

Tell Mrs. Warren that I shall write her a letter, as she desired, and let her know some of my reflections in this country. My venerable colleague[1] enjoys a privilege here, that is much to be envied. Being seventy years of age, the ladies not only allow him to embrace them as often as he pleases, but they are perpetually embracing him. I told him, yesterday, I would write this to America.

LETTER CLIV.

Passy, 3 June, 1778.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

On the 13th of February I left you. It is now the 3d of June, and I have not received a line, nor heard a word, directly nor indirectly, concerning you, since my departure. This is a situation of mind in which I never was before, and I assure you, I feel a great deal of anxiety at it; yet I do not wonder at it, because I suppose few vessels have sailed from Boston since ours. I have shipped for you the articles you requested, and the black cloth for your father, to whom

[1] Dr. Franklin.

present my most affectionate and dutiful respects. Captain Tucker, if he should not be unlucky, will give you an account of your things.

It would be endless to attempt a description of this country. It is one great garden. Nature and art have conspired to render every thing here delightful. Religion and government, you will say, ought to be excepted. With all my heart. But these are no afflictions to me, because I have well fixed it in my mind as a principle, that every nation has a right to that religion and government, which it chooses, and as long as any people please themselves in these great points, I am determined they shall not displease me.

There is so much danger that my letter may fall into malicious hands, that I should not choose to be too free in my observations upon the customs and manners of this people. But thus much I may say with truth and without offence, that there is no people in the world who take so much pains to please, nor any whose endeavors in this way have more success. Their arts and manners, taste and language, are more respected in Europe than those of any other nation. Luxury, dissipation and effeminacy are pretty nearly of the same degree of excess here, and in every other part of Europe. The great cardinal virtue of temperance, however, I believe, flourishes here more than in any other part of Europe.

My dear countrymen! how shall I persuade you to avoid the plague of Europe! Luxury has as many and as bewitching charms on your side of the ocean

as on this; and luxury, wherever she goes, effaces from human nature the image of the Divinity. If I had power I would forever banish and exclude from America all gold, silver, precious stones, alabaster, marble, silk, velvet and lace.

O, the tyrant! the American ladies would say. What! Ay, my dear girls, these passions of yours which are so easily alarmed, and others of my own sex which are exactly like them, have done, and will do the work of tyrants in all ages. Tyrants different from me, whose power has banished, not gold indeed, but other things of greater value, wisdom, virtue and liberty. My son and servant are well. I am, with an ardor that words have not power to express.

Yours,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CLV.

Passy, 16 June, 1778.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

SINCE my last, I have had the inexpressible pleasure of yours of the 25th of March by the way of Holland, which is the first and the last letter as yet received from you. This will be delivered to you by a young gentleman of the name of Archer, who is going to America to serve in our army as a volunteer. He is

a promising youth, and will tell you all the news both in England and France. Germany seems at the eve of war. The Emperor and King of Prussia are at the head of armies, and on tiptoe to strike the blow. England seems to be lost in a stupor. Byron's fleet is not yet sailed. D'Estaing's passed the straits of Gibraltar the 16th of May.

We long to hear from America the ratification of the treaty with France, the captivity of General Clinton's army, and of Lord Howe's fleet. John is very well at school. Stevens[1] is also well and behaves well. My love to all my little ones.

I want a few pamphlets here; "The thoughts on Government," "The New York Constitution," "An essay of a constitution of government for Pennsylvania," said to have been written by Mr. Dickinson. Look them up and send them.

I cannot learn that any reinforcement is to be sent to America this summer. They can spare none. They are in a panic from an apprehension of an invasion. Ireland is grown tumultuous, is concerting a non-importation agreement, and gives symptoms of an insurrection.

[1] A domestic who accompanied Mr. Adams.

LETTER CLVI.

Passy, 23 September, 1778.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

A VERY idle, vain conversation at a dinner has produced you this letter[1] from a venerable old lady in this neighborhood, the wife of Monsieur Grand the banker. As the subject was introduced, and according to the turn the conversation really took, there was not so much vanity and ostentation on my part as you will suspect from her account of it. But as I speak French very imperfectly, and she understands not a syllable of English, I suppose she did not fully understand me. All that I maintained was, that it was the duty of a good citizen to sacrifice all to his country in some circumstances. God grant, I may never be called to do this again so often as I have done already, for I have hazarded all, very often, and done as much as sacrifice all, sometimes. You will have a delicate task to answer her. Write to her in English. She has a son about five and twenty, who is a master of English, and will interpret. It is a virtuous family, and very civil to me and my dear Johnny, of whom the whole family is very fond.

We are in deep concern for America ; the last accounts having left D'Estaing going to Rhode Island and Lord Howe after him.

[1] Enclosed.

It is high time for me to write to my children, but hitherto I have not had time. I hope you have received twenty letters from me, in which I have desired you to draw upon me for what money you want.

Yours,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CLVII.

Passy, 6 November, 1778.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

WE have received information that so many of our letters have been thrown overboard, that I fear you will not have heard so often from me as both of us wish. I have written often, but my letters have not been worth so much as other things which I have sent you. I sent you a small present by Captain Niles, but he is taken by a Jersey privateer. I sent you also some other things by Captain Barnes; and what affects me quite as much, I sent the things that my dear brother Cranch requested me to send, by the same vessels. These vessels were chosen because they were fast sailers, and so small as to be able to see danger before they could be seen; but all is taken and sent into Guernsey and Jersey. By Captain Tucker, I sent you the whole of the list you gave me of articles for the family. These, I hope, have ar-

rived safe, but I have been so unlucky that I feel averse to meddling in this way. The whole loss is a trifle, it is true. But to you, in the convenience of the family, and to Mr. Cranch in his business, it would have been of value. If the *Boston* arrives, the little chest she carries to you will be of service.

My anxiety for you and for the public is not diminished by time or distance. The great number of accidental disappointments in the course of the last summer are afflicting. But we hope for better luck another year. It seems to be the intention of Heaven that we should be taught the full value of our liberty by the dearness of the purchase, and the importance of public virtue by the necessity of it. There seems to be also a further design, that of eradicating forever from the heart of every American, every tender sentiment towards Great Britain, that we may, sometime or other, know how to make the full advantage of our independence by more extensive connexions with other countries. Whatever syren songs of peace may be sung in your ears, you may depend upon it from me, (who unhappily have been seldom mistaken in my guesses of the intentions of the British government for fourteen years,) that every malevolent passion and every insidious art will predominate in the British cabinet against us. Their threats of Russians and of great reinforcements are false and impracticable, and they know them to be so; but their threats of doing mischief with the forces they have, will be verified as far as their power.

It is by no means pleasant to me to be forever im-

puting malicious policy to a nation that I have ever wished and still wish I could esteem. But truth must be attended to; and almost all Europe, the Dutch especially, are at this day talking of Great Britain in the style of American sons of liberty. I hope the unfortunate events at Rhode Island[1] will produce no heart-burnings between our countrymen and the Comte d'Estaing, who is allowed by all Europe to be a great and worthy officer, and by all who know him to be a zealous friend of America.

I have enjoyed uncommon health since my arrival in this country, and, if it was peace and my family here, I could be happy. But never, never shall I enjoy happy days without either. My little son gives me great pleasure both by his assiduity to his books, and his discreet behavior. The lessons of his mamma are a constant lesson to him, and the reflection that they are so to his sister and brothers are a never-failing consolation to me at times when I feel more tenderness for them than words can express, or than I should choose to express, if I had power. Remember me in the most affectionate manner to our parents, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, and what shall I say — children.

My respects where they are due, which is in so many places that I cannot name them. With regard to my connexions with the public business here, which you will be naturally inquisitive to know something of, I can only say, that we have many disagreeable cir-

[1] The failure of a project to attack the British at Newport, by the departure of Comte d'Estaing.

cumstances here, many difficulties to accomplish the wishes of our constituents, and to give satisfaction to certain half-anglified Americans, and what is more serious and affecting, to real and deserving Americans, who are suffering in England, and escaping from thence. But from this court, this city and nation, I have experienced nothing but uninterrupted politeness. It is not possible for me to express more tenderness and affection to you than will be suggested by the name of

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CLVIII.

Passy, 27 November, 1778.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

MR. BROWN is here, and I cannot miss the opportunity by him to write you a line. I know not how often you receive letters from me, so many are taken or sunk ; but I write as often as I can.

I have received some letters from you, which will occasion your name to be classed with Mrs. Macaulay and Madame Dacier, for aught I know. Johnny is very well. Stevens had a fall yesterday, which hurt him a little, but not very badly. He is in a good way this morning. The things enclosed, which were a present to me, you will do as you please with.

Europe is the dullest place in the world. No news but the lies which the emissaries of England are making and spreading in every part. We get no news from Congress, or any part of America. By hints in some letters which I have heard of, I expect that the first vessel will bring us news of some new regulations of Congress concerning foreign affairs. It is said that Congress has determined to have but one commissioner at this court. If this is true, as I suppose it is, as it comes from Mr. D., I am uncertain what is to be done with me. It is said that I am to be sent to some other court, and that the Doctor is to be here alone. If this should be the case, I should be puzzled what to do. The motives of Congress are very good to save expenses, but this motive will not have its effect, if I am to be maintained here in idleness, or sent upon my travels to other countries, where I shall not be received, which will be the most painful situation imaginable to me. In this case I should be at a loss whether to return home immediately, or wait until I could write to Congress and obtain leave. Some of my friends here are of opinion that I ought not to return without leave. I would not take any step that should give any just cause of offence to Congress or the people. But I cannot eat pensions and sinecures. They would stick in my throat. I wish some honest vessel would arrive and resolve my doubts.

LETTER CLIX.

Passy, 2 December, 1778.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

LAST night an express from M. de Sartines, whose politeness upon this occasion was very obliging, brought me your letters of September 29th and October 10th. The joy which the receipt of these packets afforded me, was damped by the disagreeable articles of intelligence, but still more so by the symptoms of grief and complaint which appeared in the letters. For heaven's sake, my dear, don 't indulge a thought that it is possible for me to neglect or forget all that is dear to me in this world. It is impossible for me to write as I did in America. What should I write? It is not safe to write any thing that one is not willing should go into all the newspapers of the world. I know not by whom to write. I never know what conveyance is safe. Vessels may have arrived without letters from me. I am five hundred miles from Bordeaux, and not much less distant from Nantes. I know nothing of many vessels that go from the seaports, and if I knew of all, there are some that I should not trust. Notwithstanding this, I have written to you not much less than fifty letters. I am astonished that you have received no more. But almost every vessel has been taken. Two vessels by which I sent goods to you for the use of your family, and one by which I

sent Mr. Cranch's things, we know, have been taken. In every one of these I sent large packets of letters and papers for Congress, for you, and for many friends. God knows I don't spend my time in idleness, or in gazing at curiosities. I never wrote more letters, however empty they may have been. But by what I hear, they have been all, or nearly all, taken or sunk. My friends complain that they have not received letters from me. I may as well complain. I have received scarcely any letters from America. I have written three where I have received one. From my friend, Mr. Adams, I have received only one short card ; from Mr. Gerry, not a syllable ; from Mr. Lovell, only two or three, very short. What shall I say ? I doubt not they have written oftener, but letters miscarry. Drs. Cooper and Gordon write to Dr. Franklin, not to me. My friend Warren has been good as usual. I have received several fine, long letters, full of sound sense, useful intelligence, and reflections as virtuous, as wise as usual from him. I have answered them and written more, but whether they arrive, I know not.

I approve very much of your draught upon me in favor of your cousin. The moment it arrives, it shall be paid. Draw for more as you may have occasion. But make them give you gold and silver for your bills. Your son is the joy of my heart, without abating in the least degree of my affection for the young rogue that did not seem as if he had a father, or his brother or sister. Tell Abby her papa likes her the better for what she tells her brother, viz. : " that she

don 't talk much," because I know she thinks and feels the more. I hope the *Boston* has arrived. She carried many things for you.

Last night a friend from England brought me the King's speech. Their delirium continues, and they go on with the war, but the speech betrays a manifest expectation that Spain will join against them, and the debates betray a dread of Holland. They have reason for both. They have not and cannot get an ally. They cannot send any considerable reinforcement to America.

Your reflections upon the rewards of the virtuous friends of the public are very just. But if virtue was to be rewarded with wealth, it would not be virtue. If virtue was to be rewarded with fame, it would not be virtue of the sublimest kind. Who would not rather be Fabricius than Cæsar? Who would not rather be Aristides than even William the Third? Who! Nobody would be of this mind but Aristides and Fabricius. These characters are very rare, but the more precious. Nature has made more insects than birds, more butterflies than eagles, more foxes than lions, more pebbles than diamonds. The most excellent of her productions both in the physical, intellectual and moral world, are the most rare. I would not be a butterfly because children run after them, nor because dull philosophers boast of them in their cabinets.

Have you ever read J. J. Rousseau? If not, read him. Your cousin Smith has him. What a difference between him and Chesterfield and even Voltaire? But

he was too virtuous for the age and for Europe.[1] I wish I could not say for another country.

I am much disappointed in not receiving despatches from Congress by this opportunity. We expect alterations in the plan here. What will be done with me I can't conjecture. If I am recalled, I will endeavor to get a safe opportunity home. I will watch the proper season, and look out for a good vessel. And if I can get safe to Penn's hill, shall never repent of my voyage to Europe, because I have gained an insight into several things that I never should have understood without it.

I pray you to remember me with every sentiment of tenderness, duty and affection to your father and my mother, your and my brothers and sisters, uncles, aunts, cousins, and every body else that you know deserves it. What shall I say too of my dear young friends by your fireside? May God Almighty bless them and make them wise!

LETTER CLX.

Passy, 18 December, 1778.

This moment I had, what shall I say? the pleasure

[1] This was probably written after reading "Emile," and before Rousseau's personal history became known to the public, through the medium of his confessions.

or the pain of your letter of 25th October.[1] As a letter from my dearest friend it gave me a pleasure that it would be in vain to attempt to describe; but the complaints in it gave me more pain than I can express. This is the third letter I have received in this complaining style. The former two I have not answered. I had endeavored to answer them. I have written several answers; but upon a review, they appeared to be such as I could not send. One was angry, another was full of grief, and the third with melancholy, so that I burnt them all. If you write me in this style, I shall leave off writing entirely. It kills me. Can profession of esteem be wanting from me to you? Can protestation of affection be necessary? Can tokens of remembrance be desired? The very idea of this sickens me. Am I not wretched enough in this banishment without this? What course shall I take, to convince you that my heart is warm? You doubt, it seems. Shall I declare it? Shall I swear to it? Would you doubt it the less? and is it possible you should doubt it? I know it is not. If I could once believe it possible, I should not answer for the consequences. But I beg you would never more write to me in such a strain, for it really makes me unhappy. Be assured, that no time nor place can change my heart; but that I think so often and so much of the blessings from which I am separated, as to be too unmindful of those who accompany me; and that I write to you as often as my duty will permit.

[1] Letters of Mrs. Adams, Vol. I. p. 132.

I am extremely obliged to the Comte d'Estaing and his officers for their politeness to you, and am very glad you have had an opportunity of seeing so much of the French nation. The accounts from all hands agree, that there was an agreeable intercourse and happy harmony, upon the whole, between the inhabitants and the fleets. The more this nation is known, and the more their language is understood, the more will narrow prejudices wear away. British fleets and armies are very different from their's. In point of temperance and politeness, there is no comparison.

This is not a correct copy, but you will pardon it, because it is done by a hand[1] as dear to you as to your

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CLXI.

Passy, 27 December, 1778.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

MR. GREENLEAF is about to set off towards Nantes, and from thence to Boston.

Last night I walked to Paris and saw the illumination for the birth of the princess Maria Theresa Charlotte, Fille du Roi. Splendid indeed! My little friend,[2] who was with me, will write you a description of it.

[1] His son's.

[2] His son, J. Q. Adams, then eleven years old.

The military schools, the hospital of invalids and the palace of Bourbon were beautiful and sublime indeed ; as much so as an illumination can be. I could scarcely have conceived that an illumination could have such an effect. I suppose the expense of this is a million of livres. As much as I respect this country, particularly the King and royal family, I could not help reflecting how many families in another country would this tallow make happy for life ; how many privateers would this tallow fit out for chasing away the Jerseymen and making reprisals on Messieurs les Anglois. But taste will have its way in this country.

The Queen and her illustrious infant are very well, and this nation is very happy to have discovered a way by which a dauphin may come to them next year or the year after. The King and Queen are greatly beloved here. Every day shows fresh proofs of it. On the other side the channel there is a King, who is in a fair way to be the object of opposite sentiments to a nation, if he is not at present. If Keppel should be destroyed in life or reputation, I shall expect to hear that all restraints are taken off, and passions allowed to sport themselves without reserve. Keppel told the King he would not fight against America ; an unpardonable offence. He will be ruined if possible. However, I think that Keppel was wrong even to accept a command against the French. If Britain is wrong in this war against America, she is wrong in that against the French, for France and America have the same object in view and no other. France is right if America is right, because France only assisted the Ameri-

can cause, for which John Bull abused and fought her. But John will come off wretchedly. He will be beaten. He has been beaten. There have been more British men of war already taken and destroyed than they lost in two former wars, and more sailors, prisoners.

LETTER CLXII.

Passy, 30 December, 1778.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We wait, and wait, and wait forever, without any news from America. We get nothing but what comes from England and to other people here, and they make it as they please. We have had nothing from Congress an immense while. Every merchant and every merchant's apprentice has letters and news when I have none. In truth, I have been so long from Boston that every body there, almost, has forgotten me. I have expected, every moment for almost two months, my recall.

Carlisle, Cornwallis and Eden are arrived in England, but bring no good news for the English, or we should have had it in the Gazette. The two houses of Parliament join ministry and commissioners in threatening fire and sword. They seem to think it necessary to threaten most, when they can do least.

They, however, show their disposition, which they will indulge and gratify if they can. But be not dismayed. They can do no great things. Patience, perseverance and firmness will overcome all our difficulties. Where the Comte d'Estaing is, is a great mystery. The greater, the better. The English fancy he is returning to Europe. But we believe he is gone where he will do something. The English reproach the French with gasconade, but they never gasconaded as the English do now. I suppose they will say as Burgoyne did, "Speak daggers but use none." But I believe, however, that they and he would use them if they could. Of all the wrong heads Johnstone is the most consummate. The Tories at New York and Philadelphia have filled his head with a million lies. He seems to have taken a New York newspaper for holy writ. Parliament is adjourned to the 14th January. Of this you may be assured, that England can get no allies. The new secretary at war makes a vast parade of the number of men in their service by sea and land. But it is a mere delusion. They intend to byngify Keppel to all appearance; but killing him will not mend rotten ships nor make sailors.

I dined to-day at the Dutchess D'Enville's. When I saw the companies of militia on their march to fight her husband,[1] I did not expect this. Did you?

[1] In 1746. "England was not more alarmed with the Spanish Armada in 1588 than Boston and the other North American seaports were with the arrival of this fleet in their neighborhood." Hutchinson, vol. 2, p. 425. This expedition

LETTER CLXIII.

Passy, 1 January, 1779.

I WISH you a happy new year and many happy years, and all the blessings of life. Who knows but this year may be more prosperous for our country than any we have seen? For my own part I have hopes that it will. Great blessings are in store for it, and they may come this year as well as another. You and I, however, must prepare our minds to enjoy the prosperity of others, not our own. In poverty and simplicity we shall be happy, whenever our country is so. Johnny sends duty. Mr. Williams waits. I knew of his going but this moment. I think I shall see you this year in spite of British men of war. If it should be otherwise ordered, however, we must submit.

LETTER CLXIV.

Passy, 9 February, 1779.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

IT is now a year, within a day or two, of my departure from home. It is in vain for me to think of wri-

was fitted out by France and commanded by the Duc d'Enville. Mr. Adams was then eleven years old. Mrs. Adams only two.

ting of what is passed. The character and situation in which I am here, and the situation of public affairs absolutely forbid my writing freely. I must be excused. So many vessels are taken, and there are so many persons indiscreet, and so many others inquisitive, that I may not write. God knows how much I suffer for want of writing to you. It used to be a cordial to my spirits.

Thus much I can say with perfect sincerity, that I have found nothing to disgust me, or in any manner disturb me, in the French nation. My evils here arise altogether from Americans. If I would have enlisted myself under the banner of either party,[1] I might have filled America, I doubt not, with panegyrics of me from one party, and curses and slanders from another. I have endeavored to be hitherto impartial, to search for nothing but the truth, and to love nobody and nothing but the public good, at least not more than the public good. I have hoped that animosities might be softened, and the still small voice of reason heard more, and the boisterous roar of passions and prejudices less. But the publication of a certain address[2] to the people has destroyed all such hopes. Nothing remains now, but the fearful looking for of the fiery indignation of the monster party, here.

My consolation is that the partisans are no more than

[1] Among the former members of the commission, Franklin and Deane, and Arthur Lee, supported by his brother.

[2] Written by Silas Deane.

"bubbles on the sea of matter borne,
They rise, they break, and to that sea return."

The people of America, I know, stand like Mount Atlas, but these altercations occasion a great deal of unhappiness for the present, and they prolong the war. Those must answer for it who are guilty. I am not.

LETTER CLXV.

Passy, 13 February, 1779.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Yours of 15th December was sent me yesterday by the Marquis, whose praises are celebrated in all the letters from America. You must be content to receive a short letter, because I have not time now to write a long one. I have lost many of your letters, which are invaluable to me, and you have lost a vast number of mine. Barnes, Niles, and many other vessels are lost.

I have received intelligence much more agreeable than that of a removal to Holland; I mean that of being reduced to a private citizen, which gives me more pleasure than you can imagine. I shall therefore soon present before you your own good man. Happy happy indeed shall I be, once more to see our fireside. I have written before to Mrs. Warren, and shall write again now. Dr. J. is transcribing your

Scotch song,[1] which is a charming one. Oh, my leaping heart!

I must not write a word to you about politics, because you are a woman.

What an offence have I committed! A woman!

I shall soon make it up. I think women better than men, in general, and I know, that you can keep a secret as well as any man whatever. But the world don't know this. Therefore if I were to write my sentiments to you, and the letter should be caught and hitched into a newspaper, the world would say, I was not to be trusted with a secret.

I never had so much trouble in my life as here, and yet I grow fat. The climate and soil agree with me. So do the cookery and even the manners of the people, of those of them at least that I converse with, churlish republican as some of you on your side the water call me. The English have got at me in their newspapers. They make fine work of me — fanatic, bigot, perfect cipher, not one word of the language, awkward figure, uncouth dress, no address, no character, cunning, hard-hearted attorney; but the falsest of it all is, that I am disgusted with the Parisians. Whereas I admire the Parisians prodigiously. They are the happiest people in the world, I believe, and have the best disposition to make others so. If I had your ladyship and our little folks here, and no politics to plague me, and a hundred thousand livres a year rent, I should be the happiest being on earth.

[1] Letters of Mrs. Adams, Vol. I. p. 136.

Nay, I believe I could make it do with twenty thousand.

One word of politics. The English reproach the French with gasconade, but I don't believe their whole history could produce so much of it as the English have practised this war. The commissioners' proclamation with its sanction from the ministry and ratification by both houses, I suppose is hereafter to be interpreted like Burgoyne's, "Speaking daggers but using none." They cannot send any considerable reinforcement, nor get an ally in Europe. This, I think, you may depend upon. Their artifice in throwing out such extravagant threats was so gross, that I presume it has not imposed on any. Yet a nation that regarded its character never could have threatened in that manner.

Adieu.

LETTER CLXVI.

[Passy], 20 February, 1779.

In the margin[1] are the dates of all the letters I have received from you. I have written you several times

[1] 25 March. 18 May. 10, 18 June. 10, 21, 25 October. 2, 15 December, 1778. 2, 4 January, 1779. The second in order is the only one printed among the letters of Mrs. Adams, Vol. I. p. 121.

that number. They are almost all lost, I suppose by yours. But you should consider, it is a different thing to have five hundred correspondents and but one. It is a different thing to be under an absolute restraint and under none. It would be an easy thing for me to ruin you and your children by an indiscreet letter, and what is more, it would be easy to throw our country into convulsions. For God's sake never reproach me again with not writing or with writing scrips. Your wounds are too deep. You know not, you feel not the dangers that surround me, nor those that may be brought upon our country. Millions would not tempt me to write you as I used. I have no security that every letter I write you will not be broken open, and copied, and transmitted to Congress and to English newspapers. They would find no treason nor deceit in them, it is true, but they would find weakness and indiscretion, which they would make as ill a use of.

There are spies upon every word I utter, and every syllable I write. Spies planted by the English, spies planted by stockjobbers, spies planted by selfish merchants, and spies planted by envious and malicious politicians. I have been all along aware of this, more or less, but more so now than ever. My life has been often in danger, but I never considered my reputation and character so much in danger as now. I can pass for a fool, but I will not pass for a dishonest or a mercenary man. Be upon your guard, therefore. I must be upon mine, and I will.

LETTER CLXVII.

[Passy,] 20 February, 1779.

A NEW commission has arrived by which the Dr.[1] is sole minister. Mr. Lee continues commissioner for Spain, but I am reduced to the condition of a private citizen. The Congress have not taken the least notice of me. On the 11th of September they resolved to have one minister only in France. On the 14th they chose the Dr. In October they made out his commission, the Alliance sailed on the 14th January, and in all that interval they never so much as bid me come home, bid me stay, or told me I had done well or done ill. Considering the accusation against Mr. Lee,[2] how unexpected it was, and how groundless it is, I should not be at all surprised if I should see an accusation against me for something or other, I know not what, but I see that all things are possible.

Of all the scenes I ever passed through, this is the most extraordinary. The delirium among Americans here is the most extravagant. All the infernal arts of stockjobbers, all the voracious avarice of merchants have mingled themselves with American politics here, disturbed their operations, distracted our councils, and turned our heads.

[1] Franklin.

[2] Made by Silas Deane.

The Congress, I presume, expect that I should come home, and I shall come accordingly. As they have no business for me in Europe, I must contrive to get some for myself at home. Prepare yourself for removing to Boston, into the old house, for there you shall go, and there I will draw writs and deeds, and harangue juries, and be happy.

LETTER CLXVIII.

Passy, 21 February, 1779.

Yours by Mr. Williams I have received. The little bill must be paid, but I confess it alarms me a little. The expense of my son here is greater than I ever imagined. Although his company is almost all the pleasure I have in life, yet I should not have brought him if I had known the expense. His expenses, together with what you have drawn for, and a little collection of books I have bought, will amount to more than will ever be allowed me. My accounts must not be drawn into intricacy or obscurity. I must not be involved in suspicions of meddling in trade, or any thing else but my proper business.

You complain that I don 't write often enough, and that when I do, my letters are too short. If I were to tell you all the tenderness of my heart, I should do nothing but write to you. I beg of you not to be

uneasy. I write you as often and as much as I ought. If I had a heart at ease, and leisure enough, I could write you several sheets a day, of the curiosities of this country. But it is as much impossible for me to think of such subjects as to work miracles. Let me entreat you to consider, if some of your letters had by any accident been taken, what a figure would they have made in a newspaper, to be read by the whole world? Some of them, it is true, would have done honor to the most virtuous and most accomplished Roman matron; but others of them would have made you and me very ridiculous. In one of yours you hint that I am to go to Holland. But I think you must be misinformed. By all that I can learn, some gentlemen intend to vote for me to Holland *vs.* Mr. D.; others to Spain *vs.* Mr. Lee. Neither, I think, will succeed; and therefore I think I have but one course to steer, and that is, homewards. But I can determine nothing absolutely. I must govern myself according to the intelligence which may hereafter arise, the orders of Congress and the best judgment I can form of my own duty and the public good.

I am advised to take a ride to Geneva, or to Amsterdam; and I have been so confined from exercise, having never been further from Paris than Versailles since my arrival here, that some such excursion seems necessary for my health; yet I cannot well bear the thought of putting the public to an expense merely for the sake of my pleasure, health or convenience. Yet my situation here is painful. I never was in such a situation before as I am now, and my present feelings are new

to me. If I should return, and in my absence any orders should arrive here for me to execute, in that case nobody would be here to execute them, and they might possibly fail of success for want of somebody with power to perform them; at least, this may be suspected and said and believed. However, upon the whole, as Congress have said nothing to me good or bad, I have no right to presume that they mean to say anything, and therefore, on the whole, it is my duty to return by the first opportunity, unless I should receive counter orders before that occurs. If ever the time should arrive, when I could have a little leisure and a quiet mind, I could entertain you with accounts of things which would amuse you and your children. There are an infinity of curiosities here, but so far from having leisure to describe them, I have found none even to see them, except a very few.

The climate here is charming. The weather is every day pleasant as the month of May; soft, mild air; some foggy days, and about ten or twelve days in January were cold and icy. But we have had scarce three inches of snow the whole winter. The climate is more favorable to my constitution than ours. The cookery and manner of living here, which you know Americans were taught by their former absurd masters to dislike, is more agreeable to me than you can imagine. The manners of the people have an affection in them that is very amiable. There is such a choice of elegant entertainments in the theatric way, of good company, and excellent books, that nothing would be wanting to me in this country

but my family and peace to my country, to make me one of the happiest of men. John Bull would growl and bellow at this description. Let him bellow if he will, for he is but a brute.

LETTER CLXIX.

Passy, 27 February, 1779.

The weather continuing fine, I went to Saint Denis, a little village about eight miles from this place, where are the tombs of all the kings and queens. The statues of all lie in state in marble. The church is called the royal Church of Saint Denis, is magnificent, and there is an apartment in a chamber, where the crowns and many other curiosities are preserved. It is curious to see such a collection of gold, ivory and precious stones; as there is every species, I suppose, that is mentioned in the Revelation. The diamonds and rubbies glitter. But I confess I have so much of the savage sachem in me, that these things make no great impression upon me. There are several little crucifixes here, which the ecclesiastic, who showed them, told us, were made of bits of the true cross. This may be, for any thing that I know.

In my return, I took a circuit round by Montmartre, and dined at home with the Dr., who has a fit of the gout, but is getting better.

The situation in which my masters have left me puzzles me very much. They have said nothing to me. But one set of gentlemen write that I am to go to Spain, another to Holland, a third to Vienna; but, upon the whole, I believe they don't intend to send me to either, but leave me to stay here in a ridiculous situation, or return home if I can get there. I shall return unless I should receive, before the time arrives for the vessel to sail, orders which I can execute with honor, and with a prospect of rendering some service to the public. But of these two last points, I will judge for myself.

LETTER CLXX.

L'Orient, 14 May, 1779.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

When I left Paris, the 8th of March, I expected to have been at home before this day, and have done my utmost to get to sea, but the embarrassments and disappointments I have met with have been many, very many. I have, however, in the course of them, had a fine opportunity of seeing Nantes, L'Orient and Brest, as well as the intermediate country.

By the gracious invitation of the King, I am now to take passage in his frigate, the *Sensible*, with his new Ambassador to America, the Chevalier de la

Luzerne. I hope to see you in six or seven weeks. Never was any man in such a state of uncertainty and suspense as I have been from last October, entirely uninformed of the intentions of Congress concerning me. This would not have been very painful to me if I could have got home. Your conversation is a compensation to me for all other things.

My son has had a great opportunity to see this country ; but this has unavoidably retarded his education in some other things. He has enjoyed perfect health, from first to last, and is respected wherever he goes, for his vigor and vivacity both of mind and body, for his constant good humor, and for his rapid progress in French as well as his general knowledge, which, for his age, is uncommon. I long to see his sister and brothers. I need not add —

LETTER CLXXI.

Boston, 13 November, 1779.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE just sent Mr. Thaxter, Johnny and Stevens with the things on board. I shall go with Charles[1] at four o'clock. It is now three. I have seen the captain and the navy board, etc. It is proposed to sail tomorrow ; perhaps, however, it may not be till next

[1] Mr. Adams's second son.

day. Mr. Dana will come on board at nine tomorrow. Mr. Hancock has sent me a card to invite me to go on board with him in the castle barge. Don't make many words of this. Your aunt has given me a barrel of cranberries. I shall make a good use of them, I hope.

Let me entreat you to keep up your spirits and throw off cares as much as possible. Love to Abby and Tommy. We shall yet be happy, I hope and pray, and I don't doubt it. I shall have vexations enough, as usual. You will have anxiety and tenderness enough, as usual. Pray strive not to have too much. I will write by every opportunity I can get.

Yours ever, ever yours,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CLXXII.

Ferrol, 11 December, 1779.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

WE have had an escape again;[1] but are arrived safely in Spain. As the frigate will probably not get from this place these two months, I must go by land to Paris, which I suppose is a journey of between three and four hundred leagues. That part of it

[1] The frigate sprung a leak, and was compelled to make for the first harbor, which proved to be Ferrol, in Spain.

which is in Spain is very mountainous. No post, bad roads, bad taverns, and very dear. We must ride mules, horses not being to be had. I must get some kind of carriage for the children, if possible. They are very well. Charles has sustained the voyage and behaves as well as ever his brother did. He is much pleased with what he sees. Sammy Cooper, too, is very well. These young gentlemen give me a vast deal of trouble in this unexpected journey. I have bought a dictionary and grammar, and they are learning the Spanish language as fast as possible. What could we do, if you and all the family were with me ?

Ferrol is a magnificent port and harbor. It is fortified by nature, by rows of lofty rocky mountains on each side the narrow entrance of it, and the public works, the fortifications, barracks, arsenals, &c., which are of stone very like Braintree stone, exceed any thing I have seen. I dined the day before yesterday with Don Joseph Saint Vincent, the Lieutenant General of the Marine, who is the commandant of this port, with four and twenty French and Spanish officers. The difference between gravity and gaiety was an amusing speculation. Yesterday, I dined on board the Triomphant, an eighty-gun French ship, commanded by the Chef d'Escadre, M. Sade, and have engagements for every day for a much longer time than I shall stay. The French consul and vice consul have been particularly polite and obliging to me. In short, I never was better pleased with a reception at any place.

There is no news. Nothing has been done in Europe. England is as insolent in language as ever; but this is only ridiculous, as it is apparently impotent.

Adieu.

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CLXXIII.

Ferrol, 12 December, 1779.

THE French consul had agreed to carry me, Mr. Dana, Mr. Allen, and my three children and our three servants, this day to Corunna, which is about five leagues from this place, by water, in a barge of fourteen oars, but the weather proved so boisterous that it was impossible to go.

To give you some idea of the place where we are, Cape Finisterre and Cape Ortegal are two long arms of land stretched out into the sea, which embrace a large body of water. Within this bay are two other points of land, within one of which is Ferrol, where we now are, and within the other is Corunna, where we intended to have gone this day, if the weather had permitted; but we hope to go tomorrow. We can get neither horses, nor mules, nor carriages, in this place, for ourselves or our baggage, which I am much surprised at, as it is so grand a port. Living and con-

veniences for conveyance are very dear in this place, which will run my expenses very high. There is nothing remarkable here but the natural strength of the place and the artificial fortifications, together with the arsenals, dry docks, barracks and military matters by sea and land. The city is small, not very well built nor accommodated. Very little commerce or manufactures, industry or diversions. There are two or three elegant churches, and there is an Italian opera. There is the appearance of much devotion, and there are many ecclesiastics.

It is dull enough to be in a country, so wholly ignorant of the language and usages ; but we have furnished ourselves with a dictionary and grammar, and are learning every hour. Charles is much pleased with what he sees and hears, and behaves very discreetly. John is writing to you and his sister and brother. I excused myself from dining today on board the Souverain and on board the Jason, two French men-of-war. Yesterday I dined on board the Triomphant, and the children on board the Jason. The French officers appear today with cockades in honor of the triple alliance — a large white ribbon for the French, a smaller red one for the Spaniards, and a black one for the Americans, which makes a pretty appearance.

Upon looking a little into the Spanish language, I find it so very nearly like the Latin, that I am persuaded we shall learn more of it in a month than we did of French in half a year. The manners of the Spaniards and French are as opposite as grave and

gay. The dress of the Spanish officers is much like the French. That of the people a little different. Men and women, gentlemen and ladies, are very fond of long hair, which often reaches, braided in a queue or bound round with a black ribbon, almost to their hams. The ladies wear cloaks, black or white, which come over their heads and shoulders and reach down to their waists. They have fine black eyes, and consequently dark, but yet lively complexions.

When, O when shall I see you again and live in peace?

The Russian ambassador lately appointed to relieve the one lately in London, passed through France and was a fortnight or three weeks at Paris, from whence the shrewd politicians have conjectured that peace was about to be mediated by that power. But it is said that England is as reluctant to acknowledge the independence of America as to cede Gibraltar, the last of which is insisted upon as well as the first. But this is only bruit.

Adieu.

LETTER CLXXIV.

Corunna, 16 December, 1779.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

LAST night we all arrived in this place from Ferrol. The distance is about twenty miles by land, over high

mountains and bad roads. You would have been diverted to have seen us all mounted upon our mules and marching in train. From the mountains we had all along the prospect of a rich, fertile country, cultivated up to the tops of the highest hills and down to the very edge of water, all along the shore.

I made my visit last night to the governor of the province, who resides here, and to the governor of the town, and was politely received by both. I have a long journey before me of a thousand miles, I suppose, at least, to Paris. Through this kingdom we shall have bad roads and worse accommodations. I don't expect to be able to get to Paris in less than thirty days. I shall have an opportunity of seeing Spain, but it will be at a great expense. I am advised by every body to go by land. The frigate, the *Sensible*, is in so bad condition as to make it probable she will not be fit to put to sea in less than three or four weeks, perhaps five or six; and then we should have the storms and enemies of the Bay of Biscay to escape or encounter. After this wandering way of life is passed, I hope to return to my best friend and pass the remainder of our days in quiet.

I cannot learn that Great Britain is yet in temper to listen to propositions of peace, and I don't expect before another winter to have much to do in my present capacity. My tenderest affection to our dear children, and believe me

Ever yours.

LETTER CLXXV.

Bilboa, 16 January, 1780.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We arrived here last night, all alive, but all very near sick with violent colds taken on the road for want of comfortable accommodations. I was advised on all hands to come by land rather than wait an uncertain time for a passage by sea. But if I had known the difficulties of travelling in that part of Spain which I have passed through, I think I should not have ventured upon the journey. It is in vain to attempt a description of our passage. Through the province of Gallicia, and again when we came to that of Biscay, we had an uninterrupted succession of mountains; through that of Leon and the old Castile, constant plains. A country tolerably good by nature, but not well cultivated. Through the whole of the journey the taverns were inconvenient to us, because there are no chimneys in their houses, and we had cold weather. A great part of the way, the wretchedness of our accommodation exceeds all description.

At Bilboa we fare very well, and have received much civility from Messrs. Gardoqui and Sons, as we did at Ferrol and Corunna from M. de Tournelle and M. Lagoanere. I wish I could send you some few things for the use of the family from hence, but the risk is such, that I believe I had better wait until we

get to France. I have undergone the greatest anxiety for the children through a tedious journey and voyage. I hope their travels will be of service to them, but those at home are best off. My love to them.

Adieu, adieu,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CLXXVI.

Paris, Hotel de Valois, 16 February, 1780.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE the honor to be lodged here with no less a personage than the Prince of Hesse Cassel, who is here upon a visit. We occupy different apartments in the same house, and have no intercourse with each other, to be sure; but some wags are of opinion, that if I were authorized to open a negotiation with him, I might obtain from him as many troops to fight on our side of the question as he has already hired out to the English against us.

I have found every thing agreeable here as yet. The children are happy in their academy, of which I send you the plan enclosed.

The English bounce a great deal about obtaining seven thousand troops from the petty German princes and ten thousand from Ireland to send to America,

but this is only a repetition of their annual gasconade. We are in pain for Charleston, S. C., being apprehensive that they have made or will make an effort to obtain that; which will be a terrible misfortune to that people, and a great loss to the United States, but will be no lasting advantage to our enemies.

The channel of correspondence you propose, by way of Bilboa and Cadiz, will bring many letters no doubt, and I have received one of the 10th of December, but the postage is so expensive, being obliged to pay forty-four livres for the packet that came with yours, that I would not advise you to send any thing that way, unless it be a single letter or any thing material in the journals of Congress, or letters from my friends in Congress or elsewhere, that contain any thing particularly interesting. The house of Joseph Gardoqui and Sons have sent to you, by Captain Babson, of Newburyport, belonging to Mr. Tracy, some necessaries for the family, and you may write to Mr. Gardoqui for any thing you want by any vessel belonging to your uncle, to Mr. Jackson, or Mr. Tracy, provided you don't exceed one hundred dollars by any one vessel. Mr. Gardoqui will readily send them and draw upon me for the money.

I had a great deal of pleasure in the acquaintance of this family of Guardoquis, and was treated by them with the magnificence of a prince. They will be very glad to be useful to you in any thing they can do. You will remember, however, that we have many children, and that our duty to them requires that we should manage all our affairs with the strict-

est economy. My journey through Spain has been infinitely expensive to me, and exceeded far my income. It is very expensive here, and I fear that I shall find it difficult to make both ends meet; but I must and will send you something for necessary use by every opportunity. If Mr. Lovell does not procure me the resolution of Congress I mentioned to him, that of drawing on a certain gentleman or his banker, I shall soon be starved out. Pray mention it to him.

I shall write as often as possible, but conveyances will be very rare, I fear.

I am, as I ever was and ever shall be,

Yours, yours, yours.

LETTER CLXXVIII.

Paris. Hotel de Valois,
Rue de Richelieu, 23 February, 1780.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE children made me a visit to-day, and went with me to dine with my old friends, the two Abbés, whom you have often heard me mention, Chalut and Arnoux, who desire me to mention them to you in my letters as devoted friends of America, and particular friends to me and to you, notwithstanding the difference of religion. The children are still in good

health and spirits, and well pleased with their academy. Ah! how much pain have these young gentlemen cost me within these three months! The mountains, the cold, the mules, the houses without chimneys or windows, the —— I will not add. I wish for a painter to draw me and my company mounted on muleback, or riding in the calashes, or walking, for we walked one third of the way. Yet by the help of constant care and expense, I have been able to get them all safe to Paris. The other moiety of the family is quite as near my heart, and therefore I hope they will never be ramblers. I am sick of rambling. If I could transport the other moiety of the family across the Atlantic with a wish, and be sure of returning them, when it should become necessary, in the same manner, how happy should I be!

I have been received here with much cordiality, and am daily visited by characters who do me much honor. Some day or other you will know, I believe, but I had better not say at present. Your friend, the Comte d'Estaing, however, I ought to mention, because you have been acquainted with him. I have dined with him, and he has visited me and I him, and I hope to have many more conversations with him, for public reasons, not private, for on a private account great men and little are much alike to me.

Mr. Lee and Mr. Izard are going home in the *Alliance*, and, I hope, will make you a visit. How many vicissitudes they are to experience, as well as I and all the rest of our countrymen, I know not. The events of politics are not less uncertain than those

of war. Whatever they may be, I shall be content. Of one thing I am pretty sure, that if I return again safe to America, I shall be happy the remainder of my days, because I shall stay at home, and at home I must be to be happy. There is no improbability that I may be obliged to come home again soon, for want of means to stay here. I hope, however, care will be taken that something may be done to supply us. My tenderest affection to Abby and Tommy. They are better off than their brothers, after all. I have been taking measures to send home your things. I hope to succeed by the Alliance. It shall not be my fault, if I do not. If I cannot send by her, I will wait for another frigate, if it is a year, for I have no confidence in other vessels.

Yours, forever yours.

LETTER CLXXVIII.[1]

MY DEAR PORTIA,

THE enclosed dialogue in the shades was written by Mr. Edmund Jennings, now residing at Brussels, a native of Maryland. I will send you the rest when I can get it. How I lament the loss of my packets by Austin! There were, I suppose, letters from

[1] The two letters which follow are without date. The context fixes them early in 1780.

Congress of great importance to me. I know not what I shall do without them. I suppose there was authority to draw, etc. Mr. T.'s letter from his father hints that Mr. L. is coming here. This will be excellent.

Since my arrival this time, I have driven about Paris more than I did before. The rural scenes around this town are charming. The public walks, gardens, &c., are extremely beautiful. The gardens of the Palais Royal and the gardens of the Tuileries are very fine. The Place de Louis XV., the Place Vendome or Place de Louis XIV., the Place Victoire, the Place Royale, are fine squares, ornamented with very magnificent statues. I wish I had time to describe these objects to you, in a manner that I should have done twenty-five years ago, but my head is too full of schemes, and my heart of anxiety, to use expressions borrowed from you know whom. To take a walk in the gardens of the palace of the Tuileries, and describe the statues there, all in marble, in which the ancient divinities and heroes are represented with exquisite art, would be a very pleasant amusement and instructive entertainment, improving in history, mythology, poetry, as well as in statuary. Another walk in the gardens of Versailles would be useful and agreeable. But to observe these objects with taste and describe them, so as to be understood, would require more time and thought than I can possibly spare. It is not indeed the fine arts which our country requires; the useful, the mechanic arts, are those which we have occasion for in a young country

as yet simple and not far advanced in luxury, although perhaps much too far for her age and character. I could fill volumes with descriptions of temples and palaces, paintings, sculptures, tapestry, porcelain, &c., &c., &c., if I could have time ; but I could not do this without neglecting my duty. The science of government, it is my duty to study, more than all other sciences ; the arts of legislation and administration and negotiation, ought to take place of, indeed to exclude, in a manner, all other arts. I must study politics and war that my sons may have liberty to study mathematics and philosophy. My sons ought to study mathematics and philosophy, geography, natural history and naval architecture, navigation, commerce and agriculture, in order to give their children a right to study painting, poetry, music, architecture, statuary, tapestry and porcelain.

Adieu.

LETTER CLXXIX.

MY DEAR PORTIA,

YESTERDAY we went to see the garden of the King, *Jardin du Roi*, and his cabinet of natural history, *cabinet d'histoire naturelle*. The cabinet of natural history is a great collection of metals, minerals, shells, insects, birds, beasts, fishes and precious stones. They are arranged in good order and preserved in good condition, with the name of every

thing, beautifully written on a piece of paper, annexed to it. There is also a collection of woods and marbles. The garden is large and airy, affording fine walks between rows of trees. Here is a collection, from all parts of the world, of all the plants, roots and vegetables that are used in medicine, and indeed of all the plants and trees in the world. A fine scene for the studious youths in physic and philosophy. It was a public day. There was a great deal of company, and I had opportunity only to take a cursory view. The whole is very curious. There is a handsome statue of M. Buffon, the great natural historian, whose works you have, whose labors have given fame to this cabinet and garden. When shall we have in America such collections? The collection of American curiosities that I saw at Norwalk, in Connecticut, made by Mr. Arnold, which he afterwards, to my great mortification, sold to Governor Tryon, convinces me that our country affords as ample materials for collections of this nature as any part of the world.

Five midshipmen of the *Alliance* came here last night, Marston, Hogan, Fitzgerald, and two others, from Norway, where they were sent with prizes, which the court of Denmark were absurd and unjust enough to restore to the English. They, however, treated the officers and people well, and defrayed their expenses. They say the Norwegians were very angry with the court of Copenhagen for delivering up these vessels. It was the blunder of ignorance, I believe, rather than any ill will.

Every day, when I ride out without any particular

business to do or visit to make, I order my servant to carry me to some place where I never was before, so that, at last, I believe, I have seen all Paris and all the fields and scenes about it that are near it. It is very pleasant. Charles is as well beloved here as at home. Wherever he goes every body loves him. Mr. Dana is as fond of him, I think, as I am. He learns very well.

There is a volume in folio just published here, which I yesterday ran over at a bookseller's shop. It is a description and a copper-plate of all the engravings upon precious stones in the collection of the Duke of Orleans. The stamps are extremely beautiful, and are representations of the gods and heroes of antiquity, with most of the fables of their mythology. Such a book would be very useful to the children in studying the classics, but it is too dear; three guineas unbound. There is every thing here that can inform the understanding or refine the taste, and indeed, one would think, that could purify the heart. Yet it must be remembered, there is every thing here, too, which can seduce, betray, deceive, deprave, corrupt and debauch it. Hercules marches here in full view of the steeps of virtue on one hand and the flowery paths of pleasure on the other, and there are few who make the choice of Hercules. That my children may follow his example is my earnest prayer; but I sometimes tremble when I hear the siren song of sloth, lest they should be captivated with her bewitching charms, and her soft, insinuating music.

LETTER CLXXX.

[Paris], 17 June, 1780.

MY DEAR PORTIA,

I YESTERDAY received a letter of the 26th of April from brother Cranch, for which I thank him and will answer as soon as possible. He tells me you have drawn a little bill upon me. I am sorry for it, because I have sent and should continue to send you small presents, by which you would be enabled to do better than by drawing bills. I would not have you draw any more. I will send you things which will defray your expenses better. The machine is horribly dear. Mr. C. desires to know if he may draw on me. I wish it was in my power to oblige him, but it is not. I have no remittances, nor any thing to depend on. Not a line from Congress, nor any member, since I left you. My expenses through Spain were beyond all imagination, and my expenses here are so exorbitant, that I can't answer any bill from any body, not even from you, excepting the one you have drawn. I must beg you to be as prudent as possible. Depend upon it, your children will have occasion for all your economy. Mr. Johonnot must send me some bills. Every farthing is expended and more. You can have no idea of my unavoidable expenses. I know not what to do. Your little affairs and those of all our friends, Mr. Wibird, &c., are on board the *Alli-*

ance, and have been so these four months, or ready to be. Pray write me by way of Spain and Holland, as well as France. We are all well. My duty to your father, my mother, and affection and respects where due. My affections, I fear, got the better of my judgment in bringing my boys. They behave very well, however.

London is in the horrors. Governor Hutchinson fell down dead at the first appearance of mobs. They have been terrible. A spirit of bigotry and fanaticism mixing with the universal discontents of the nation has broken out into violences of the most dreadful nature, burned Lord Mansfield's house, books, manuscripts; burned the king's bench prison and all the other prisons, let loose all the debtors and criminals, tore to pieces Sir George Saville's house, insulted all the lords of Parliament, &c., &c. Many have been killed, martial law proclaimed, many hanged. Lord George Gordon committed to the Tower for high treason, and where it will end, God only knows. The mobs all cried, peace with America, and war with France. Poor wretches! as if this were possible!

In the English papers they have inserted the death of Mr. Hutchinson with severity, in these words. "Governor Hutchinson is no more. On Saturday last he dropped down dead. It is charity to hope that his sins will be buried with him in the tomb, but they must be recorded in his epitaph. His misrepresentations have contributed to the continuance of the war with America. Examples are necessary. It is to be

hoped that all will not escape into the grave without a previous appearance either on a gibbet or a scaffold."

Governor Bernard, I am told, died last fall. I wish that, with these primary instruments of the calamities that now distress almost all the world, the evils themselves may come to an end. For although they will undoubtedly end in the welfare of mankind, and accomplish the benevolent designs of providence towards the two worlds, yet, for the present, they are not joyous but grievous. May heaven permit you and me to enjoy the cool evening of life in tranquillity, undisturbed by the cares of politics or war, and above all, with the sweetest of all reflections, that neither ambition nor vanity, nor avarice, nor malice nor envy, nor revenge nor fear, nor any base motive or sordid passion through the whole course of this mighty revolution, and the rapid, impetuous course of great and terrible events that have attended it, have drawn us aside from the line of our duty and the dictates of our consciences. Let us have ambition enough to keep our simplicity or frugality, and our integrity, and transmit these virtues as the fairest of inheritances to our children.

LETTER CLXXXI.

Amsterdam, 15 September, 1780.

MY DEAR PORTIA,

I WISH you to write me by every opportunity to this place as well as to France. It seems as if I never should get any more letters from America. I have sent you some things by Captain Davis, but he has no arms and I fear they will be lost by capture. I sent things by the *Alliance.*

The country where I am is the greatest curiosity in the world. This nation is not known any where, not even by its neighbors. The Dutch language is spoken by none but themselves. Therefore they converse with nobody, and nobody converses with them. The English are a great nation, and they despise the Dutch because they are smaller. The French are a greater nation still, and therefore they despise the Dutch because they are still smaller in comparison to them. But I doubt much whether there is any nation of Europe more estimable than the Dutch in proportion. Their industry and economy ought to be examples to the world. They have less ambition, I mean that of conquest and military glory, than their neighbors, but I don 't perceive that they have more avarice. And they carry learning and arts, I think, to greater extent. The collections of curiosities, public and private, are innumerable.

I am told that Mr. Searle is arrived at Brest; but I have learned nothing from him as yet, nor do I know his destination. The French and Spanish fleets have made a sweep of sixty upon the English East India and West India fleets. This must have great effects. We are all well. Don't expect peace. The English have not yet forgotten the acquisition of Charleston, for which they are making the most childish exultations. The new parliament will give ministry a run. Mark my words, you will have no peace but what you give yourselves by destroying, root and branch, all the British force in America. The English cannot bear the thought that France should dictate the terms of peace, as they call it. They say they must make a dishonorable peace now, a shameful peace, a degrading peace. This is worse than death to them, and thus they will go on, until they are forced to sue for a peace still more shameful and humiliating.

LETTER CLXXXII.

Amsterdam, 18 December, 1780.

MY DEAREST PORTIA,

I HAVE this morning sent Mr. Thaxter with my two sons to Leyden, there to take up their residence for some time, and there to pursue their studies of Latin

and Greek under the excellent masters, and there to attend lectures of the celebrated professors, in that university. It is much cheaper there than here. The air is infinitely purer, and the company and conversation are better. It is perhaps as learned a university as any in Europe.

I should not wish to have children educated in the common schools in this country, where a littleness of soul is notorious. The masters are mean spirited wretches, pinching, kicking and boxing the children upon every turn. There is besides a general littleness arising from the incessant contemplation of stivers and duits, which pervades the whole people. Frugality and industry are virtues every where, but avarice and stinginess are not frugality. The Dutch say that without a habit of thinking of every duit before you spend it, no man can be a good merchant, or conduct trade with success. This I believe is a just maxim in general, but I would never wish to see a son of mine govern himself by it. It is the sure and certain way for an industrious man to be rich. It is the only possible way for a merchant to become the first merchant or the richest man in the place. But this is an object that I hope none of my children will ever aim at. It is indeed true, every where, that those who attend to small expenses are always rich.

I would have my children attend to duits and farthings as devoutly as the merest Dutchman upon earth, if such attention was necessary to support their independence. A man who discovers a disposition and a design to be independent seldom succeeds.

A jealousy arises against him. The tyrants are alarmed on one side lest he should oppose them. The slaves are alarmed on the other lest he should expose their servility. The cry from all quarters is, "He is the proudest man in the world. He cannot bear to be under obligation." I never in my life observed any one endeavoring to lay me under particular obligations to him, but I suspected he had a design to make me his dependent, and to have claims upon my gratitude. This I should have no objection to, because gratitude is always in one's power. But the danger is, that men will expect and require more of us than honor and innocence and rectitude will permit us to perform.

In our country, however, any man, with common industry and prudence, may be independent. But to put an end to this stuff,

Adieu — most affectionately adieu.

LETTER CLXXXIII.

Amsterdam, 2 December, 1781.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your favors of September 29 and October 21 are before me. I avoided saying any thing about Charles to save you the anxiety, which I fear you will now feel in its greatest severity, a long time. I thought

he would go directly home in a short passage in the best opportunity which would probably ever present. But I am disappointed. Charles is at Bilboa with Major Jackson and Colonel Trumbull, who take the best care of his education, as well as his health and behavior. They are to go hence with Captain Hill in a good vessel of twenty guns. Charles's health was so much affected by this tainted atmosphere, and he had set his heart so much upon going home with Gillon, that it would have broken it to have refused him. I desire I may never again have the weakness to bring a child to Europe. They are infinitely better at home. We have all been sick here, myself, Mr. Thaxter, Stevens and another servant, but are all better. Mr. Thaxter's indisposition has been slight and short, mine and Stevens's long and severe.

I beg you would not flatter yourself with hopes of peace. There will be no such thing for several years. Don 't distress yourself neither about any malicious attempts to injure me in the estimation of my countrymen. Let them take their course and go the length of their tether. They will never hurt your husband, whose character is fortified with a shield of innocence and honor ten thousand fold stronger than brass or iron. The contemptible essays made by you know whom will only tend to his own confusion. My letters have shown them their own ignorance, a sight they could not bear. Say as little about it as I do. It has already brought them into the true system, and that system is triumphant. I laugh and will laugh before all posterity at their impotent rage and envy.

They could not help blushing themselves if they were to review their conduct.

Dear Tom, thy letter does thee much honor. Thy brother Charles shall teach thee French and Dutch at home. I wish I could get time to correspond with thee and thy sister more regularly, but I cannot. I must trust Providence and thine excellent mamma for the education of my children. Mr. Dana and our son are well at Petersburg. Hayden has some things for you. I hope he is arrived. I am sorry to learn you have a sum of paper. How could you be so imprudent? You must be frugal, I assure you. Your children will be poorly off. I can but barely live in the manner that is indispensably demanded of me by every body. Living is dear indeed here. My children will not be so well left by their father as he was by his. They will be infected with the examples and habits and tastes for expensive living without the means. He was not. My children shall never have the smallest soil of dishonor or disgrace brought upon them by their father, no, not to please ministers, kings or nations. At the expense of a little of this, my children might perhaps ride at their ease through life, but dearly as I love them, they shall live in the service of their country, in her navy, her army, or even out of either in the extremest degree of poverty, before I will depart in the smallest iota from my sentiments of honor and delicacy; for I, even I, have sentiments of delicacy as exquisite as the proudest minister that ever served a monarch. They may not be exactly like those of some ministers.

I beg you would excuse me to my dear friends, to whom I cannot write so often as I wish. I have indispensable duties which take up all my time, and require more than I have.

General Washington has done me great honor and much public service by sending me authentic accounts of his own and General Greene's last great actions. They are in the way to negotiate peace. It lies wholly with them. No other ministers but they and their colleagues in the army can accomplish the great event.

I am keeping house, but I want a housekeeper. What a fine affair it would be, if we could flit across the Atlantic as they say the angels do, from planet to planet! I would dart to Penn's hill and bring you over on my wings; but, alas, we must keep house separately for some time. But one thing I am determined on. If God should please to restore me once more to your fireside, I will never again leave it without your ladyship's company — no, not even to go to Congress at Philadelphia, and there I am determined to go, if I can make interest enough to get chosen, whenever I return. I would give a million sterling that you were here; and I could afford it as well as Great Britain can the thirty millions she must spend, the ensuing year, to complete her own ruin.

Farewell, farewell.

LETTER CLXXXIV.

Amsterdam, 18 December, 1781.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE letters from Mr. Dana and his young attendant[1] at St. Petersburg. Both well and in good spirits. Letters to Mrs. Dana and to you go by Captain Trowbridge and by Dr. Dexter. I have no certain news as yet of Charles's sailing from Bilboa, but I presume he is sailed. You will have suffered great anxiety on his account, but I pray he may arrive safe. I acted for the best when I consented he should go with Gillon, little expecting that he would be landed in Spain again. Keep him to his studies, and send him to college, where I wish his brother John was.

My health is feeble, but better than it was. I am busy enough, yet not to much perceptible purpose as yet. There is no prospect at all of peace. Let our people take care of their trade and privateers next year. They have not much of a land war to fear. General Washington has struck the most sublime stroke of all in that article of the capitulation which reserves the tories for trial by their peers. This has struck toryism dumb and dead. I expect that all the rancor of the refugees will be poured out upon Cornwallis for it. Our enemies now really stand in a

[1] Mr. Adams's son.

ridiculous light. They feel it, but cannot take the resolution to be wise. The Romans never saw but one caudine forks in their whole history. Americans have shown the Britons two in one war. But they must do more. Remember, you never will have peace, while the Britons have a company of soldiers at liberty within the United States. New York must be taken, or you will never have peace. All in good time.

The British army estimates are the same as last year. The navy less by several ships of the line. What can these people hope for? I fancy the southern States will hold their heads very high. They have a right. They will scarcely be overrun again, I believe, even in the hasty manner of Cornwallis. Burgoyne don't seem to be affronted that his nose is out of joint. He is in good spirits. Experience has convinced him, so I hope it has Cornwallis, that the American war is impracticable. The flower, the choice of the British army was with him. The King of England consoles his people under all their disgraces, disasters and dismal prospects, by telling them that they are brave and free. It is a pity for him that he did not allow the Americans to be so seven years ago. But the great designs of Providence must be accomplished. Great indeed! The progress of society will be accelerated by centuries by this revolution. The Emperor of Germany is adopting, as fast as he can, American ideas of toleration and religious liberty, and it will become the fashionable system of all Europe very soon. Light spreads from the day

spring in the west, and may it shine more and more until the perfect day! Duty to parents. Love to brothers, sisters and children. It is not in the power of worlds to express the tenderness with which I bid you farewell.

LETTER CLXXXV.

The Hague, 25 July, 1782.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

In this country, as in all others, men are much addicted to "hobby horses." These nags are called in the language of the Dutch "Liefhebbery," as they are called in French "Marotte." I had rather ride a Dutch hobby horse than an English one, or a French. It is the wholesomest exercise in the world. They live to great age by the strength of it.

My meaning is this. They pitch in early life upon some domestic amusement, which they follow all their days at leisure hours. I shall give you the history of several. I yesterday made a visit to one, a M. Lionet, a venerable old man of seventy-five, in full health, strength and vivacity, respectable for several offices which he holds, but more so for vast learning in various kinds, and great ingenuity. His hobby horse has been natural knowledge. We went to see a collection of marine shells. We were two hours, and had

not got half through. The infinite variety of figures and colors is astonishing.

But his curiosity has not been confined to shells. It has extended to insects, and he has had it in contemplation to write as full an account of these, as Buffon has written of birds, beasts and fishes. But beginning with caterpillars, he has filled a folio upon that species, and he drew and engraved the plates himself. Thus he rode his hobby horse and lived. Without it he would have died fifty years ago. Have you an inclination to read and inspect cuts of the anatomy of caterpillars — their nerves, blood, juices, bones, hair, senses, intellects, &c., &c., their moral sense, their laws, government, manners and customs. I don't know whether he teaches the manner of destroying them and saving the apple tree. I doubt not the book is worth studying. All nature is so. But I have too much to do to study men and their mischievous designs upon apple trees and other things, ever to be very intimate with Monsieur Lionet (whom I respect very much, however,) or his book.

Adieu.

LETTER CLXXXVI.

[Hague,] 31 August, 1782.

All well — you will send these papers to some printer when you have done with them.

We have found that the only way of guarding against fevers is to ride. We accordingly mount our horses every day. But the weather through the whole spring and most of the summer, has been very dull, damp, cold, very disagreeable and dangerous. But shaking on horseback guards pretty well against it.

I am going to dinner with a Duke and a Dutchess and a number of Ambassadors and Senators in all the luxury of this luxurious world; but how much more luxurious it would be to me to dine upon roast beef with Parson Smith, Dr. Tufts, or Norton Quincy! or upon rusticoat potatoes with Portia! Ah! Oh! hi, ho, hum, and her daughter and sons!

LETTER CLXXXVII.

Hague, 17 September, 1782.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I have transmitted money to the young men whom you mentioned to me,[1] and have expected, every day for a long time, to hear of their sailing in a cartel for America. They have been better treated since the change of ministers. My respects to their parents.

It is now five months since my public reception here, but we have not yet learned that any news of it

[1] Letters of Mrs. Adams, Vol. I., p. 171.

has arrived in America. The refugees in England are at their old game again. Andrew Sparhawk has published, in the Morning Post, that his brother has received a letter from New York, that Massachusetts and several other States were upon the point of overturning the new government, throwing off the authority of Congress, and returning to the government of Great Britain. Their blood-thirsty souls are not yet satiated. They are laboring to bring on again an offensive war. But I think they can't succeed. I suppose the unhappy affair of the county of Hampshire[1] is the thing that gave occasion to this representation. Our countrymen must be very unreasonable if they can't be easy and happy under the government they have. I don't know where they will find a better, or how they will make one. I dread the consequences of the differences between chiefs. If Massachusetts gets into parties, they will worry one another very rudely. But I rely on the honesty and sobriety as well as good sense of the people. These qualities will overawe the passions of individuals and preserve a steady administration of the laws.

My duty to my mother and to your father. I hope to see them again. Love to the children and all friends. What shall I say of my brother Cranch? I long, and yet I dread to hear from him.

I hope to sign the treaty this week or next, or the

[1] An attempt to prevent the sitting of the Supreme Court, occasioned by the severity of the times. See Bradford's History of Massachusetts, vol. ii., p. 211.

week after. All points are agreed on, and nothing remains but to transcribe the copies fair. This government is so complicated, that months are consumed in doing what might be done in another in an hour.

I don 't know what to do with the list of articles you send me. It would be better for you to write to Ingraham and Bromfield. I will pay.

LETTER CLXXXVIII.

Paris, 4 December, 1782.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

YOUR proposal of coming to Europe has long and tenderly affected me. The dangers and inconveniences are such, and a European life would be so disagreeable to you, that I have suffered a great deal of anxiety in reflecting upon it. And upon the whole, I think it will be most for the happiness of my family, and most for the honor of our country, that I should come home. I have, therefore, this day written to Congress a resignation of all my employments,[1] and as soon as I shall receive their acceptance of it, I will embark for America, which will be in the spring or beginning of summer. Our son is now on his jour-

[1] "Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution," vol. vi., p. 464.

ney from Petersburg, through Sweden, Denmark, and Germany, and if it please God he come safe, he shall come with me, and I pray we may all meet once more, you and I never to separate again.

Yours most tenderly,

J. Adams.

LETTER CLXXXIX.

Paris, 28 December, 1782.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I DARE say there is not a lady in America treated with a more curious dish of politics than is contained in the enclosed papers. You may show them to discreet friends, but by no means let them go out of your hands or be copied. Preserve them in safety against accidents.

I am afraid we shall have another campaign ; but do not despair, however, of a peace this winter. America has nothing to do but to be temperate, patient, and faithful to her ally. This is as clearly her duty as it is her interest. She could not trust England if her honor was not engaged to France, which it is most certainly ; and when this is said, all is said. Whether there should be peace or war, I shall come home in the summer. As soon as I shall receive from Congress their acceptance of the resignation of

all my employments, which I have transmitted many ways, I shall embark, and you may depend upon a good domestic husband for the remainder of my life, if it is the will of heaven that I should once more meet you. My promises are not lightly made with any body. I have never broken one made to you, and I will not begin at this time of life.

My children, I hope, will once at length discover that they have a father, who is not unmindful of their welfare. They have had too much reason to think themselves forgotten, although I know that an anxiety for their happiness has corroded me every day of my life.

With a tenderness which words cannot express, I am theirs and yours forever.

J. Adams.

LETTER CXC.

Paris, 18 February, 1783.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

The peace, which sets the rest of the world at ease, increases, I think, my perplexities and anxiety. I have written to Congress a resignation, but I foresee there will not be a speedy decision upon it, and I shall be left in a state of suspense that will be intolerable. Foreseeing this, I am determined not to

wait for an acceptance of my resignation, but to come home without it, provided it does not arrive in a reasonable time. Don 't think, therefore, of coming to Europe. If you do, we shall cross each other, and I shall arrive in America about the same time that you may arrive in Europe.

I shall certainly return home in the spring. With or without leave, resignation accepted or not, home I will come, so you have nothing to do but wait to receive your old friend

J. Adams.

LETTER CXCI.

Paris, 27 February, 1783.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

"L'ambition dans l'oisiveté, la bassesse dans l'orgeuil, le desir de s'enrichir sans travail, l'aversion pour la vérité, la flatterie, la trahison, la perfidie, l'abandon de tous ses engagemens, le mépris des devoirs du citoyen, la crainte de la vertu du prince, l'espérance de ses foiblesses, et plus que tout cela, le ridicule perpétuel jetté sur la vertu, forment, je crois, le caractère du plus grand nombre des courtisans, marqué dans tous les lieux et dans tous les temps." [1]

It is Montesquieu who draws this picture, and I

[1] "De l'esprit des loix," book iii., chap. 5.

think it is drawn from the life, and is an exact resemblance. You cannot wonder, then, that I am weary, and wish to be at home upon almost any terms. Your life would be dismal in a high degree, you would be in a hideous solitude among millions. None of them would be society for you that you could endure. Mrs. Jay is in this situation, ardently longing to come home. Yet she is much better circumstanced than you are, to be abroad, as her family is smaller and younger. You must leave a part of your family.

No. Let us live in our own country, and in our own way, educate our children to be good for something. Upon no consideration whatever would I have any of my children educated in Europe. In conscience I could not consent to it.

If Congress had been steady and continued in force my commission to make a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, I should have gone to London, and have finished the treaty before now; but I should not have thought of residing in London long. I should have resigned and returned to America in a year or two at farthest. If Congress should now revive my commission and send me a new one, which I think altogether improbable, but believe they will complete their work by sending another man upon that errand, I would not stay longer in England than a year or two at farthest. I cannot bear the thought of a long banishment from my own native soil where alone I can ever be happy or comfortable.

I write you by every opportunity, lest you should embark for Europe when I am upon my passage

home, which would be a terrible disappointment to both. My intention is to come home, whether I receive the acceptance of my resignation or not, unless I receive a commission to St. James's. Don't you embark, therefore, until you receive a letter from me desiring you to come. If I should receive such a commission, I will write you immediately by way of France, Holland and England, and shall wish you to come to me on the wings of the wind. But the same influence, French influence I mean, which induced Congress to revoke my commission, will still continue to prevent the revival of it. And I think it likely, too, that English influence will now be added to French, for I don't believe that George wishes to see my face. In this case I shall enjoy the satisfaction of coming, where I wish most to be, with all my children, living in simplicity, innocence and repose.

What I write you upon this subject is in confidence, and must not be communicated but with great discretion.

Yours entirely and forever,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CXCII.

Paris, 30 May, 1783.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

HERE I am out of all patience. Not a word from America. The British ministry lingering on. Mr. Hartley uncertain what to do. No regulation of commerce agreed on. No definitive treaty of peace signed, nor likely to be signed very soon. My spring passage home lost. To embark in July or August would be the worst season of the whole year, on account of heats and calms. I don't see a possibility of embarking before September or October. The total idleness, the perpetual uncertainty we are in, is the most insipid and at the same time disgusting and provoking situation imaginable. I had rather be employed in carting street dust and marsh mud. Neither do I know how or where I shall get a passage. I could now go with Mr. Van Berckel in a fine new sixty-eight gun ship. In the fall, I suppose I shall be obliged to step on board a merchant ship loaded down to the brim; but whether from Holland, or from some port in France, I know not. So many vessels will run away to England that I fear it will be difficult to find a passage from France or Holland. But we must bear it all if we can.

Our son is at the Hague, pursuing his studies with great ardor. They give him a good character wher-

ever he has been, and I hope he will make a good man. It is unaccountable that not one vessel should have arrived from any part of New England since the peace, nor for so long a time before. But all is mystery. Pray write me. Don't omit to write, until I arrive home. Direct to the care of Mr. Dumas, *à l'hotel des Etats Unis d'Amerique*, at the Hague, or to the care of Mr. Jay, at Paris. These gentlemen will take care of your letters, if I should be gone.

Yours, with great affection,

J. A.

LETTER CXCIII.

Paris, 8 April, 1783.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

WHAT would I not give for an arrival from America, or for certain advice from London of the appointment of a ministry, or for the arrival here of a minister to sign the definitive treaty?

9 June.

What would I not give for an arrival from America, or for advice from London what the ministry intend to do? Mr. Hartley is now here, but we advance slowly to the definitive treaty. I can now have no hopes of seeing you before late in the fall. If the

acceptance of my resignation arrives, as I expect, and we finish the peace as soon as I can reasonably hope, I shall not now be able to embark before October. The affairs of the world have little complaisance for my happiness or yours, but it is not worth our while to be impatient, because it will do us no good. I am astonished, however, that we have nothing from Congress nor from you. If you and your daughter were with me, I could keep up my spirits; but idly and insipidly as I pass my time, I am weary, worn, and disgusted to death. I had rather chop wood, dig ditches and make fence upon my poor little farm. Alas, poor farm and poorer family, what have you lost, that your country might be free, and that others might catch fish and hunt deer and beaver at their ease?

There will be as few of the tears of gratitude or the smiles of admiration or the sighs of pity for us as for the army. But all this should not hinder me from going over the same scenes again upon the same occasion, scenes which I would not encounter for all the wealth, pomp and powers of the world. Boys! if you ever say one word or utter one complaint, I will disinherit you. Work, you rogues, and be free. You will never have so hard work to do as papa has had. Daughter! get you an honest man for a husband and keep him honest. No matter whether he is rich, provided he be independent. Regard the honor and the moral character of the man, more than all other circumstances. Think of no other greatness but that of the soul, no other riches but

those of the heart. An honest, sensible, humane man, above all the littlenesses of vanity and extravagances of imagination, laboring to do good rather than be rich, to be useful rather than make a show, living in a moderate simplicity clearly within his means, and free from debts or obligations, is really the most respectable man in society, makes himself and all about him the most happy.

I long to see my dear John, as much as the rest, but he is well at the Hague, and I cannot go to him, nor do I think it prudent to bring him to Paris.

I have accomplished a correspondence between the Royal Society of Medicine here and the republican one at Boston, at the desire of Dr. Tufts, but have not yet found a careful hand to send the diploma.

Adieu, adieu, adieu.

LETTER CXCIV.

Paris, 19 June, 1783.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE legion of Lauzun has arrived, and we hope has brought the orders of Congress for us, but we have not yet received them, and are as much at a loss as ever. I know not whether my resignation is accepted, and consequently can give you no conjecture when I shall be able to get away. As the spring and

summer passage is lost, I cannot now embark before September, or October, or November. Whether I shall embark from France, Holland, or England, I don 't know. It will be according as I hear of a convenient passage. Write me by all these ways. I have received no line from you dated since December.

The definitive treaty may be signed in three weeks, and it may as probably be trained on till Christmas. In the last case, provided the acceptance of my resignation should not arrive, it may be spring before I can embark. In this state of suspense and perplexity you may well suppose I do not sleep upon a bed of roses, especially as the public affairs are as uncertain as our private ones. I should like very well to take a short tour to London before my return, for the sake of taking a look at that country, and seeing some personages there, because if I waive this opportunity it is not likely I shall ever have another. Once more at home, it is not probable I shall again go abroad. Indeed, it is more for the sake of Mr. John than for my own that I wish to see England at all.

I was at Versailles the day before yesterday, and paid my respects to the King and Queen, Monsieur and Madame his lady, the Comte d'Artois, Madame Elizabeth, and the Mesdames of France, Adelaide and Victoire. As the weather was more like a spring equinox than a summer solstice, the number of ambassadors was smaller than usual, and the attendant crowd less, so that I had a better opportunity of viewing the royal family at leisure than I ever had before.

I dined and breakfasted, indeed, with the ambassadors, and found them universally more sociable than ever they were before. They begin now universally to consider and treat us as members of their body.

It is forbidden, I suppose, to princes and princesses upon these occasions to utter a sentiment, lest they should betray a secret of state, or say something which might lead a sagacious ambassador to political consequences. Accordingly no one word is ever said, except asking a question about some common thing, as the weather, the "spectacles," or, have you come from Paris to-day? I know an ambassador who has been fourteen years at a court, who has attended regularly once a week, who says that a prince has never failed to ask him the same question every time — "Did you come from home to-day?" and never any other. This ambassador, too, is of the highest rank. Among all the officers who come in play upon these occasions, such as introducers of ambassadors, secretary of the presentations of ambassadors, &c., there ought, I think, to be one preceptor to teach the princes and princesses the art of asking questions and making observations upon these occasions.

The Prince of Orange's court is a miniature of that of Versailles. The ceremonials and the conversation of princes and princesses is much the same. The English gentlemen here, particularly Mr. Hartley, tells me I must be presented at court, if I should go to London only for a visit, in my public character as a minister at the peace. This is rather a discouraging

circumstance, as I should wish to go incog. as much as possible, and my appearance at court would make more talk than I wish. I should be stared at as a sight. I should be treated, however, complaisantly enough, I doubt not. The case is altered. I had rather make my court to my princesses at Penn's hill than to all the others in the world. This honor I hope for, but cannot promise myself so soon as I wish.

LETTER CXCV.

Paris, 7 September, 1783.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THIS morning, for the first time, was delivered me the resolution of Congress of the first of May, that a commission and instructions should be made out to me, Dr. Franklin, and Mr. Jay, to make a treaty of commerce with Great Britain. If this intelligence had been sent us by Barney, who sailed from Philadelphia a month after the first of May, and has now been sailed from hence on his return home above a month, it would have saved me and others much anxiety. I am even now at a loss. It is of great importance that such a treaty should be well made. The loan in Holland must be attended to, and when the present one is full, another must be opened, which cannot be done but by me or my successor. There are other things, too, to be

done in Europe of great importance. Mr. Laurens has leave to go home, and Mr. Dana is gone, so that there remain in service only Mr. Franklin, Mr. Jay, and myself. In these circumstances I must stay another winter. I cannot justify going home. But what shall I do for want of my family? By what I hear, I think Congress will give us all leave to come home in the spring. Will you come to me this fall and go home with me in the spring? If you will, come with my dear Abby, leaving the two boys at Mr. Shaw's, and the house and place under the care of your father, uncle Quincy, or Dr. Tufts, or Mr. Cranch. This letter may reach you by the middle of October, and in November you may embark, and a passage in November or all December will be a good season. You may embark for London, Amsterdam, or any port in France. On your arrival, you will find friends enough. The moment I hear of it, I will fly with post horses to receive you, at least; and if the balloon should be carried to such perfection in the mean time as to give mankind the safe navigation of the air, I will fly in one of them at the rate of thirty knots an hour. This is my sincere wish. Although the expense will be considerable, the trouble to you great, and you will probably have to return with me in the spring, I am so unhappy without you that I wish you would come at all events. You must bring with you at least one maid and one man servant.

I must, however, leave it with your judgment. You know better than I the real intentions at Philadel-

phia, and can determine better than I whether it will be more prudent to wait until the spring. I am determined to be with you in America, or have you with me in Europe, as soon as it can be accomplished, consistent with private prudence and the public good. I am told that Congress intend to recall us all as soon as a few affairs are finished. If this should be the case, all will be well; I shall go home with infinite pleasure. But it may be longer than you think of before all their necessary affairs will be despatched. The treaty of commerce with Great Britain must take time. A treaty will be wanted with Portugal and Denmark, if not with the Emperor and Empress. If you come to Europe this fall, in my opinion you will be glad to go home in the spring. If you come in the spring, you will wish to return the next fall. I am sure I shall. But six months of your company is worth to me all the expenses and trouble of the voyage.

This resolution of Congress deserves my gratitude. It is highly honorable to me, and restores me my feelings, which a former proceeding had taken away. I am now perfectly content to be recalled whenever they think fit, or to stay in Europe until this business is finished, provided you will come and live with me. We may spend our time together in Paris, London, or the Hague for six or twelve months, as the public business may call me, and then return to our cottage with contented minds. It would be more agreeable to my inclinations to get home, and endeavor to get myself and my children into a settled way, but I

think it is more necessary for the public that I should stay in Europe until this piece of business is finished. You don't probably know the circumstances which attend this proceeding of Congress. They are so honorable to me that I cannot in gratitude or decency refuse.

I must submit your voyage to your discretion and advice of your friends. My most earnest wishes are to see you; but if the uncertainties are such as to discourage you, I know it will be upon reasonable considerations, and must submit. But if you postpone the voyage for this fall, I shall insist on your coming in the spring, unless there is a certainty of my going home to you. Congress are at such grievous expense that I shall have no other secretary than my son. He, however, is a very good one. He writes a good hand very fast, and is steady to his pen and his books. Write me by every ship to Spain, France, Holland or England, that I may know. You give me more public intelligence than any body. The only hint in Europe of this commission was from you to

Yours, forever,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CXCVI.

Paris, 10 September, 1783.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We have received from Congress a resolution by which we are to be empowered to negotiate a treaty of commerce with Great Britain, myself, Mr. Franklin and Mr. Jay. This will detain me in Europe this winter. If this letter arrive in season that you can come to me this fall with Miss Abby, I shall be supremely happy to see you. But still things are so unsettled in Congress that you may expect to return with me in the spring. You may come to London, Amsterdam, or L'Orient, to either of which places I will soon go to receive you after hearing of your arrival.

It is, however, attended with so many inconveniences that I must submit it to your discretion, with the advice of your friends, whether to come this fall, or stay till spring and then come, in case things should not be so altered as to oblige me to come home then to you. I have written more fully by Mr. Thaxter, who sails the 20th of this month from L'Orient, in the French packet to New York. If you come, leave the boys at their school. Bring a maid and a man servant. Leave the place in the care of Dr. Tufts or your father. John is well.

Yours unfailingly,

J. Adams.

LETTER CXCVII.

London, 8 November, 1783.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE this day, by special permission from their majesties, obtained by Mr. West, the painter, who with Mr. Copley does so much honor to our country, seen the apartments in the Queen's house, as it is called, or Buckingham House. It is a great curiosity indeed. There is an inestimable collection of paintings by the greatest masters, Raphael, Rubens, Vandyke and many others. There is one room which the King calls Mr. West's, as it is ornamented with a collection of his works — the return of Regulus — the death of Epaminondas — the death of Bayard — the death of General Wolf, &c.

The cartons of Raphael are a wonderful production of art. The library is the most elegant thing I ever saw. But the King's military and naval room pleased me best, as it is a collection of plans and models of every dockyard and man of war in his empire. Come to Europe with Abby as soon as possible, and satisfy your curiosity, and improve your taste by viewing these magnificent scenes. Go to the play. See the paintings and buildings. Visit the manufactures for a few months; and then, if Congress pleases, return to America with me to reflect upon

them. I am in earnest. I cannot be happy nor tolerable without you. Besides, I really think one trip across the sea would be of service to you and my daughter, to whom my love. I shall expect you constantly until you arrive.

I mourn the loss of my father,[1] but it was time to expect it from his age. You must be melancholy and afflicted, and I hope that the voyage will divert your thoughts. Mr. Thaxter is in America before this, no doubt. My dear son is the only secretary I have or propose to have at present. I believe I shall go to the Hague and reside chiefly there ; but write to me, until you embark, by Portugal, Spain, France, England or Holland. The nearer you arrive to the Hague, the nearer I believe you will be to me, yet I may be in Paris. I shall stay but a short time in London. You will read in the newspapers innumerable lies about Jay and me. Regard them as little as I do. I have met with an agreeable reception here, as agreeable as I wish ; in short I have been received here exactly as I wished to be.

Yours, with tenderness unutterable,

J. Adams.

[1] The father of Mrs. Adams. See her letter, vol. I., p. 194. Mrs. Adams did not embark until June, 1784.

LETTER CXCVIII.

The Hague, 26 July, 1784.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your letter of the 23d has made me the happiest man upon earth. I am twenty years younger than I was yesterday. It is a cruel mortification to me that I cannot go to meet you in London, but there are a variety of reasons decisive against it, which I will communicate to you here. Meantime I send you a son who is the greatest traveller of his age, and without partiality, I think, as promising and manly a youth as is in the whole world. He will purchase a coach, in which we four must travel to Paris. Let it be large and strong, with an imperial and accommodations for travelling. I wish you to see the Hague before you go to France. The season is beautiful both here and in England. The journey here will be pleasant, excepting an hour or two of sea-sickness between Harwich and Helvoetsluys. You may come conveniently with your two children and your maid in the coach, and your man may ride on horseback or in the stage coach.

I can give you no counsel about clothes. Mr. Puller will furnish the money you want upon your order or receipt. Expenses I know, will be high, but they must be borne, and as to clothes for yourself and daughter, I beg you to do what is proper, let the ex-

pense be what it may. Every hour to me will be a day, but don't you hurry or fatigue or disquiet yourself upon the journey. Be careful of your health. After spending a week or two here, you will have to set out with me to France, but there are no seas between, a good road, a fine season, and we will make moderate journeys, and see the curiosities of several cities in our way; Utrecht, Breda, Antwerp, Brussels, &c. &c. It is the first time in Europe that I looked forward to a journey with pleasure. Now, I promise myself a great deal. I think it lucky that I am to go to Paris, where you will have an opportunity to see that city; to acquire its language, &c. It will be more agreeable to you to be there than here, perhaps, for some time. For my own part, I think myself made for this world.

Yours, with more ardor than ever,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CXCIX.

Grosvenor Square, 25 December, 1786.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THIS moment, returning from Mr. Bridgen's, where I had been to deliver him a letter to you, written this morning, I found your very acceptable favor of the 23d. I am very glad you are so well sit-

uated,[1] so much pleased with your journey and present accommodations. Don 't be solicitous about me. I shall do very well. If I am cold in the night, and an additional quantity of bed clothes will not answer the purpose of warming me, I will take a virgin to bed with me. Ay ! a virgin.

What ? Oh ! Awful ! what do I read ?

Don 't be surprised. Do you know what a virgin is ? Mr. Bridgen brought me acquainted with it this morning. It is a stone bottle, such as you buy with spruce beer and spa water, filled with boiling water, covered over or wrapped up in flannel, and laid at a man's feet in bed. An old man, you see, may comfort himself with such a virgin as much as David did with Abishag, and not give the least jealousy even to his wife, the smallest grief to his children, or any scandal to the world. Tell Mr. Bridgen, when you see him, that I am indebted to him for this important piece of knowledge, which I would not sell for a great deal of money.

Tell Colonel Smith I am half disposed to be almost miffed with him, for going off without giving me his letter about the Indians ; and what completes the mischief is, that he has all the books locked up in his room. Pray him to write me if it is possible to get at the letter or the books ; both are what I want. My love to Abby Smith and her knight, and to all the party. Mr. Shippen is with you ere now. He was

[1] Mrs. Adams was at Bath, an account of her visit to which place is given in her letter to her sister, vol. II., p. 162.

so good as to pick a bone with me once, and Mr. Cutting is very good. We now talk politics all alone, and are much cooler and more rational than when we dispute in company.

Yours forever,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CC.

Grosvenor Square, 27 December, 1786.

MY DEAREST,

MR. MURRAY, whom I am glad to see out again, will carry to Bath this memorandum, that we are all very well. He will arrive, for what I know, before Mr. Bridgen. The weather is very cold, but by a good fire and a good walk, I have not yet been obliged to recur to my expedient of an immaculate virgin bottle of hot water. I sent yesterday packets to Colonel Smith, from Paris.

The news from Boston is very well. The court has set at Cambridge in great pomp, guarded by three thousand men and a train of artillery. The General Court have passed an amnesty, with some exceptions, to all who will take the oath of allegiance in a certain time. The governor reviewed the troops and made them a speech. In short, government appears now in its majesty, supported by those in whom all majesty originally resides, the people. I have not seen the pa-

pers, but Colonel Trumbull gives me this account. Colonel Smith's toast, "Common sense to the common people," is already verified.

Make your observations. Keep your journal, and make Abby Smith do so too, and let me see all when you return.

Yours evermore,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCI.

Amsterdam, 11 March, 1788.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE passed through the ceremonial of taking leave of the States General, the prince and princess, &c., to the satisfaction of all parties, and have been feasted at court, and all that; made my compliments to the prince on the 8th of March, his birth day, and to the princess at her drawing room, &c., &c., &c., and should have been in London at this hour, if you had not laid a plot which has brought me to this town. Mr. Jefferson, at the receipt of your letter, came post to meet me, and he cuts out so much business for me, to put the money matters of the United States upon a sure footing, that I certainly shall not be able to get into the packet at Helvoet before Saturday, and I much fear not before Wednesday, the nineteenth. This delay is very painful to me, and

you must blame yourself for it altogether. I thought myself dead, and that it was well over with me as a public man; but I think I shall be forced, after my decease, to open an additional loan. At least, this is Mr. Jefferson's opinion and that of Mr. Van Staphorst.

I hope you will have every thing ready, that by the twenty-first or second of March, we may set off together for Falmouth from London. My love to Mr. and Mrs. Smith, and kiss my dear boy. Compliments to all friends. I am very impatient under this unforeseen delay; but our bankers, as well as Mr. Jefferson, think it absolutely necessary for the public. I must, therefore, submit; but if, in consequence of it, you should meet southwesters on the coast of America, and have your voyage prolonged three weeks by it, remember it is all your own intrigue which has forced me to open this loan. I suppose you will boast of it as a great public service.

Yours forever,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCII.

Amsterdam, Friday, 14 March, 1788.

MY DEAR,

I HAVE received yours of the 7th. I have written you on every post day. Mr. Jefferson is so anxious

to obtain money here to enable him to discharge some of the most urgent demands upon the United States, and preserve their credit from bankruptcy for two years longer, after which he thinks the new government will have money in their treasury from taxes, that he has prevailed upon me to open a new loan by virtue of my old power. I was very much averse to this, but he would take no denial. I shall, therefore, be detained here till Monday, but if my health continues, I shall cross over in the packet of next Wednesday. I hope every thing will be ready for us to take post for Falmouth.

The rich complain at present in Holland, that the poor are set over them in the regencies, and the old families that they are set aside by new ones. Discontent rankles deep in some places and among some sorts of men, but the common people appear to be much pleased. The patriots in this country were little read in history, less in government; knew little of the human heart and still less of the world. They have, therefore, been the dupes of foreign politics and their own indigested systems. Changes may happen and disorders may break out, though at present there is no apparent probability of either; but as there is no sense of the necessity of uniting and combining the great divisions of society in one system, no changes can happen for the better.

My love to the children, and believe me very anxious to see you.

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCIII.

Braintree, 2 December, 1788.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

BEFORE this time I hope you have the happiness to see your daughter [1] out of all danger, and your son-in-law and your two grandchildren in perfect health. I have no letter from you since that you wrote at Hartford, and I cannot find fault, because this is the first I have written to you. We are all very well, and go on very well. We are all in a flurry with politics. Mr. Dalton and Mr. Strong are senators, and Mr. Lowell will be representative for the district of Suffolk, as is generally supposed. Mr. Varnum, Mr. Partridge, Colonel Leonard, *Mr. Grout*,[2] Mr. Sedgwick or Mr. Lyman, Mr. Jackson, or Mr. Dane, or Mr. Goodhue, Mr. Thatcher or Colonel Sewell, are named for other districts.

My love to our children, and respects and regards wherever you please. Don 't be uneasy on account of your family here, nor in haste to come home before a good opportunity presents. I don 't enter into any political details. My mind has balanced all circum-

[1] Upon her arrival from Europe at New York, whither Mrs. Adams had gone to meet her.

[2] Who had been implicated in the insurrection of Shays. These elections were the first under the new constitution of government.

stances, and all are reducible to two articles — vanity and comfort. I have the alternative in my own power. If they mortify my vanity, they give me comfort. They cannot deprive me of comfort without gratifying my vanity.[1]

I am, my dearest friend, yours forever,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCIV.

Haviland's, at Rye, 19 April, 1789.

MY DEAR,

I HAVE been so diligent on the road, and so much interrupted by company at the taverns, that this is the first time I have been able to get an opportunity to write to you. We arrived at this house last night (Saturday), shall rest here to-day, and go into New York to-morrow. At Hartford, the manufacturers presented me with a piece of broadcloth for a suit of clothes. At New Haven, the corporation presented me with the freedom of the city. At both these towns the gentlemen came out to meet us, and went out with us. At Horseneck, we were met by Major Pintard and Captain Mandeville, with a party of horse from the State of New York, and there is to be

[1] Mr. Adams was made, not long after this time, Vice President, by the votes of the electors.

much parade on Monday. Before this, I presume the printers in Boston have inserted in their gazettes the debates of the House of Representatives, which are conducted with open galleries. This measure, by making the debates public, will establish the national government or break the confederation. I can conceive of no medium between these extremes. By the specimens that I have seen, they go on with great spirit in preparing the impost, which is a favorable omen.

My love to the children, and duty to my mother, &c.

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCV.

New York, 14 May, 1789.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE received yours of the 5th. If you think it best, leave Thomas at college, but I pray you to come on with Charles, as soon as possible. As to the place, let my brother plough and plant as he will, as much as he will. He may send me my half of the butter, cheese, &c., here. As to money to bear your expenses, you must, if you can, borrow of some friend, enough to bring you here. If you cannot borrow enough, you must sell horses, oxen, sheep,

cows, any thing at any rate rather than not come on. If no one will take the place, leave it to the birds of the air and beasts of the field, but at all events break up that establishment and that household. As to Daniel, he has a wife and cannot leave her; besides, he makes great wages where he is; but if you have a mind to bring Daniel, you may. We can do without him.

I have as many difficulties here, as you can have, public and private; but my life from my cradle has been a series of difficulties, and that series will continue to the grave. I hope Briesler will come, but if he cannot, we can do without him. I have taken Moustier's house, on the North River, a mile out of town. There is room enough and accommodations of all sorts, but no furniture.

I am, &c., tenderly,

JOHN ADAMS.[1]

LETTER CCVI.

Philadelphia, 9 January, 1793.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

IN your letter of December 23d, you say, "Faxon wants money to buy three cows and four young cattle." I

[1] Here is an interval of several years in the correspondence, during which the parties were little separated.

know not the price of stock, but if you can purchase him what he wants, at a reasonable rate, and can find means to pay for them, I shall be content; but I would employ some one to purchase them in Bridgewater or Abington. Faxon himself is not so judicious as he ought to be in some things.

I have the same aversion to the multiplication of banks, and the same apprehension of their pernicious tendency, as you express. But so many people live upon them that they will have their course. We shall soon be perplexed and distressed in consequence of them. I consider myself already as taxed one half of my salary and one half of all the interest of my money to support bankers and bankrupts. In short, debtors and men of no property will find means in our state of society to compel others who have something, not only to pay their debts for them, but to support them. It falls hardest on widows, orphans, salary men, and those who have money at interest, except such of these last as are at liberty to speculate. They are able to make what money they please.

I received yesterday the votes[1] from Kentucky. They are said to be all for Mr. Jefferson. Let us, my dear, prepare our minds, and as well as we can, our circumstances, to get out of this miserable scramble.

[1] Upon the second election for President and Vice President under the constitution.

It gives me pleasure to read that you are making preparations of timber for a corn-house, and I hope Shaw will be as attentive as he can through the whole winter to all my manufactures of manure, that we may make a good cornfield in the summer.

I had yesterday a charming letter from Charles. According to him, had the electors of New York been chosen by the people, their votes would have been very different. The representation of the people in their present legislature is very unequal and partial in favor of the Antis and Clinton, as he has explained very intelligibly. Mr. Taylor, the new senator from Virginia, has made a motion for opening our doors and building a gallery ; but he will not be assisted in his argument by the late example of Virginia, where the electors at Richmond opened their doors and held debates and made philippics before " the Marseillois," by which means six votes are said to have been converted either by reasoning or by fear. This example will not convince the majority of the senators of the necessity, expediency or propriety of opening their doors.

I have a warm chamber with a southern exposure, and have a fire in it day and night. I am warm enough o' nights, but cannot sleep as I ought. I have scarcely had a complete night's sleep since I left you, which keeps me apprehensive of the fever and ague in the spring. I hope, however, to escape it. I shall not be able to leave this place until the fifth or sixth of March. The roads will be bad and the jour-

ney by the stage fatiguing, but I, who was born to be a slave must fulfil the end of my creation.

Tenderly,

J. A.

Blanchard to-day is to set all the world upon the broad stare at his balloon. I wish H. would make it an interlude and send him back to Europe.

LETTER CCVII.

Philadelphia, 14 January, 1793.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THIS day I received yours of the 2d. I have received all the votes from all the States. It is known that Georgia voted with North Carolina, Virginia and New York; and Kentucky voted for Jefferson. There is no other newspaper circulated in the back country of the southern States than Freneau's National Gazette, which is employed with great industry to poison the minds of the people. The federal court has again had a sitting in Virginia, and by reason of Mr. Jay's sickness, the great cause[1] is again continued, which serves to keep up the rage in that State and North Carolina, which is its echo.

[1] Alexander Chisholm *vs.* The State of Georgia, involving the question, whether a State could be sued by a private citizen of another State.

If you hire the man you mention, you should know before hand what kind of skill and experience he has in farming, as well as his integrity and good disposition. I shall leave it, however, to you. Twenty-six pounds are too high. Twenty-four are enough; but if you cannot get one for less, we must give twenty-six.

I expect, ere long, to hear that Paine is split and sliced for an aristocrat; perhaps roasted, or broiled, or fried. He is too lean to make a good pie, but he is now in company with a number who are admirably qualified and disposed to feed upon each other. The foolish vote of the constituting assembly in favor of a rotation and excluding themselves from being re-elected has cost every man of weight and talents among them his life, or his country and his fortune. All are murdered, banished and confiscated. Danton, Robespierre, Marat, &c., are furies. Dragon's teeth have been sown in France and come up monsters. The army has behaved better, and the people seem to be zealous; but if they have not some system by which they can be united, what is to be expected? We have our Robespierres and Marats, whose wills are good to do mischief, but the flesh is weak. They cannot yet persuade the people to follow them. If the National Assembly can subdue the mutinous rabble at Paris as well as Dumourier has driven the Prussians, they may be free, and do something, but what, I know not.

Tenderly yours,

J. A.

LETTER CCVIII.

Philadelphia, 24 January, 1793.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Our good friend, General Lincoln, gave me this morning your favor of the 7th, which compensated in part for my disappointment by Monday's post. I set my heart on one letter a week, and as many more as you please.

I cannot say that my desire of fame increases. It has been strong in some parts of my life, but never so strong as my love of honesty. I never in my life, that I know of, sacrificed my principles or duty to popularity or reputation. I hope I am now too old ever to do it. But one knows not how trials may be borne till they are made. The hell-hounds are now in full cry in the newspapers against the President, whom they treat as ill as ever they did me. The same insolent and impudent Irishman who is said to have written so much against me, is now suspected to be writing against him.

Both houses of Congress are making strict inquisition into the treasury, with upright and patriotic views, no doubt. Hamilton will find no more mercy than is due from a generous nation to a faithful servant. But I presume his character will shine the brighter. However, it is still but an experiment whether the ministers of state under an elective ex-

ecutive, will not be overborne by an elective legislature. I believe it to be certain that two elective houses of legislation, or even one, have it in their power whenever they shall have it in their will, to render any minister of state, or even any elective executive, unpopular, though he may be possessed of the best talents and most perfect integrity. I presume that neither of our houses will be disposed to such injustice, but the time may come.

I am so well satisfied with my present simplicity, that I am determined never to depart from it again, so far as I have. My expenses in future, forever, shall at all events be within my income, nay, within my salary. I will no longer be the miserable dupe of vanity. My style of life is quite popular. What say you to living with me in lodgings next winter? This shall be my plan, if I cannot hire a house for six months only. Your friends, who are very numerous, inquire tenderly after your health. Benson says he is for making Mrs. Adams Autocratrix of the United States. This, however, must be secret, because it is a sort of treason.

Tenderly yours,

J. A.

LETTER CCIX.

Philadelphia, 31 January, 1793.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE this minute received your favor of the 22d. The report of the President's resignation is probably designed to prevent the rise of the stocks; but the insolence which appears every day in Bache's and Freneau's papers, proceeding from the same persons who are tired of abusing me, may be carried to a point that he will not bear. He has not been used to such threshing, and his skin is thinner than mine.

Citizen H. and Citizen A.[1] I presume will grace the civic feast. Cit and Citess is to come instead of Gaffer and Gammer, Goody and Gooden, Mr. and Mrs., I suppose.

Congress, I presume, will not sit after the second of March. I shall not be able to set off till the 5th, but I will not wait, if I travel but ten miles a day. We shall see, in a few months, the new French constitution, which may last twelve months, but probably not more than six. Robespierre and Marat, with their Jacobin supporters, I suspect, will overthrow the fabric which Condorcet, Paine and Brissot will erect. Then we shall see what they, in their turn, will erect.

[1] Hancock and Samuel Adams. The civic feast in Boston, celebrating the event of the French revolution, is within the recollection of many now living.

Mrs. Washington requests me to present to you her very particular regards. Many other ladies do the same. Citizen Briesler and Citizen V. P. are very happy together. Since they are equal and on a level, it is proper that sometimes, one should be named first, and sometimes, the other. Our countrymen are about to abandon the good old, grave, solid manners of Englishmen, their ancestors, and adopt all the apery, levity, and frivolity, of the French.

Ça ira.

Tenderly yours,

J. A.

LETTER CCX.

Philadelphia, 12 February, 1793.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I RECEIVED yesterday your kind favor of the 1st of this month, and thank you for its agreeable contents. I have now to congratulate you on the arrival of your son and daughter and two grandsons, in fine health, at New York. They have done wisely to fly from the evil to come in Europe ; although it is somewhat dubious whether our fellow citizens will have the wisdom to abstain from similar evils in this country. My friend Malesherbes is about to crown the end of his life with greater glory than he gained in his youth or middle

age, though this was splendid. Such a character as that great magistrate ought to wish to die on so great a theatre in defence of his prince, and struggling against the disgrace which enthusiasm is about to bring upon the nation.

The spirit of ambition and of conquest, which the French republic in its cradle has already discovered, has alarmed England and Holland. France has been execrated in Europe for their ambition for universal monarchy ; but the passion was imputed to their kings, Henry 4th and Louis 14th. But the people are already giving unequivocal proofs of an equal lust after a universal republic. The passion is, and always has been, in the people, the nation, and their leaders will ever be infected with it, whether they call them kings, or presidents, or citizens. I can only sigh at the prospect of calamities opening on the human race and pray God to avert them.

We have to-day a deep snow, which I hope will last till I can reach Quincy in a sleigh and there enjoy a felicity, which will never be allowed me any where else.

Tenderly yours,

J. A.

LETTER CCXI.

Philadelphia, 27 February, 1793.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I AM so anxious for your health since you informed me of the return of your intermittent, that I shall take the stage on Monday for New York, but whether I shall go by the packet to Providence, or continue in the stage to Boston, I know not. This will depend upon the wind, and other circumstances to be learned at New York.

Colonel Smith is here in good health. He is returned from France and England almost a revolutionist, if not quite. The fermentation in Europe distresses me, lest it should take a turn which may involve us in many difficulties. Our neutrality will be a very delicate thing to maintain, and I am not without apprehension that Congress, at least the Senate, may be called together in the summer, if not earlier. However, we must be prepared as well as we can for events.

The Attorney General, in opening the information to the jury, at the trial of Mr. Paine, was pleased to quote large passages from Publicola, with some handsome compliments, so that Publicola[1] is become a

[2] A signature assumed by J. Q. Adams, when writing a series of articles in a Boston newspaper, which were republished in England, and generally ascribed to his father, in both countries. See Washington's Writings, vol. x., p. 159.

law authority. Mr. Erskine in his answer, cried, "Well, let others do like Publicola, answer the book, not prosecute the author."

I am weary of reading newspapers. The times are so full of events, the whole drama of the world is such a tragedy that I am weary of the spectacle. O! my sweet little farm, what would I not give to enjoy thee without interruption! But I see no end to my servitude, however the nations of Europe, and even of Africa, may recover their liberty.

Hamilton has been sufficiently fatigued with demands for statements and information. I hope his health will hold out and his character be supported. But we have broad hints of what may be expected by executive officers who depend upon an elective head, from elective legislatures. Ambitious members of a legislature will too easily run down the popularity of ministers of state, or I am egregiously mistaken. But *ça ira.* France will soon show us examples enough of ministers falling before ambitious legislatures, if she has not exhibited enough already. Calonne, Necker, Montmorin, and twenty others, where are they?

I am, my dear, most tenderly, your

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCXII.

Philadelphia, 2 March, 1793.

MY DEAR,

Your letter from your sick chamber, if not from your sick bed, has made me so uneasy, that I must get away as soon as possible. Monday morning, at six, I am to set off in the stage, but how many days it will take to get home will depend on the roads or the winds. I don't believe Abby will go with me. Her husband is so proud of his wealth that he would not let her go, I suppose, without a coach-and-four, and such monarchical trumpery I will in future have nothing to do with. I will never travel but by the stage, nor live at the seat of government but at lodgings, while they give me so despicable an allowance. Shiver my jib and start my planks if I do.

I will stay but one night at New York. Smith says that my books are upon the table of every member of the committee for framing a constitution of government for France, except Tom Paine, and he is so conceited as to disdain to have any thing to do with books. Although I abused Smith a little above, he is very clever and agreeable: but I have been obliged to caution him against his disposition to boasting. Tell not of your prosperity, because it will make two men mad to one glad; nor of your adversity, for it will make two men glad to one sad. He

boasts too much of having made his fortune, and placed himself at his ease, above all favors of government. This is a weakness, and betrays too little knowledge of the world; too little penetration; too little discretion. I wish, however, that my boys had a little more of his activity. I must soon treat them as the pigeons treat their squabs — push them off the limb, and make them put out their wings or fall. Young pigeons will never fly till this is done. Smith has acquired the confidence of the French ministry and the better sort of the members of the national convention; but the executive is too changeable in that country to be depended on, without the utmost caution.

Adieu, adieu, tendrement,

J. A.

LETTER CCXIII.

Philadelphia, 5 December, 1793.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I WROTE you from Hartford, New York, and once from Philadelphia; but have not yet had the pleasure of a letter from you since I left home. The night before last we had a deep snow, which will probably extinguish all remaining apprehensions of infection. We hear of no sickness, and all seem at their ease, and without fear.

The President's speech will show you an abundance of serious business which we have before us. Mr. Jefferson called on me last night, and informed me that to-day we should have the whole budget of foreign affairs, British as well as French. He seems as little satisfied with the conduct of the French minister, as any one. Thomas spent the last evening with me. He has had an opportunity of seeing the courts, judges, lawyers, &c., of New Jersey, in the course of the last fall, and has, I hope, employed his time to advantage. This day, he is to be examined, and this week, sworn in. May a blessing attend him. Although I have attended and shall attend my duty punctually in senate, I shall not run about upon visits, without caution. Yet I believe there is little or no danger.

The Viscount Noailles called on me, and I enquired after all his connexions in a family, which I knew to be once in great power, wealth and splendor. He seems to despair of liberty in France, and has lost apparently all hopes of ever living in France. He was very critical in his enquiries concerning the letters[1] which were printed as mine in England. I told him candidly that I did not write them, and as frankly in confidence, who did. He says they made a great impression upon the people of England. That he heard Mr. Windham and Mr. Fox speak of them, as the best thing that had been written, and as one of the best pieces both of reasoning and style they had

[1] Of Publicola, already alluded to.

ever read. The marquis,[1] he says, is living, but injured in his health. Your old friend, the marchioness, still lives in France, in obscurity in the country. He thinks that a Constitution like that of England, would not last three days in France, and that monarchy will not be restored in a dozen years, if ever. The partitioning and arbitrary spirit of the combined powers, will contribute more than any thing towards uniting the French under their old government. Frenchmen cannot bear the partition of their country; and rather than see it divided among their neighbors, they will unite in something or other.

It will require all the address, all the temper, and all the firmness of Congress and the States to keep this people out of the war; or rather, to avoid a declaration of war against us, from some mischievous power or other. It is but little that I can do, either by the functions which the constitution has intrusted to me, or by my personal influence; but that little shall be industriously employed, until it is put beyond a doubt that it will be fruitless, and then, I shall be as ready to meet unavoidable calamities as any other citizen.

Adieu.

[1] La Fayette.

LETTER CCXIV.

Philadelphia, 19 December, 1793.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Mrs. Otis arrived, with her little rossignol, in good health and spirits, the night before last, and brought me your favor of 7th December. Why am I not so fortunate as to be able to receive my best friend and to spend my days with her, whose society is the principal delight of my life? If I could make twelve thousand dollars at a bargain, and several of such bargains in a year: but silence. So it is ordained, and we must not complain.

If a suitable season should occur for ploughing, our men may plough; if not, they may leave it till spring. I like your plan very well to stock one place with young cattle, and to apply to Shaw, if Humphreys and Porter decline to take care of the dairy in the other. I am pleased with Dr. Tufts's plan.

Citizen Genet made me a visit yesterday while I was in Senate, and left his card. I shall leave mine at his hotel tomorrow, as several of the senators have already hastened to return their visits. But we shall be in an awkward situation with this minister. I write you little concerning public affairs, because you will have every thing in print. How a government can go on, publishing all their negotiations with foreign nations I know not. To me it appears as dangerous

and pernicious as it is novel; but, upon this occasion it could not, perhaps, have been avoided. You know where, I think, was the error in the first concoction. But such errors are unavoidable when the people in crowds out of doors undertake to receive ambassadors, and to dictate to their supreme executive.

I know not how it is, but in proportion as danger threatens I grow calm. I am very apprehensive that a desperate anti-federal party will provoke all Europe by their insolence. But my country has, in its wisdom, contrived for me the most insignificant office that ever the invention of man contrived or his imagination conceived; and as I can do neither good nor evil, I must be borne away by others and meet the common fate.

The President has considered the conduct of Genet very nearly in the same light with Columbus, and has given him a bolt of thunder. We shall see how this is supported by the two houses. There are who gnash their teeth with rage which they dare not own as yet. We shall soon see whether we have any government or not in this country. If the President has made any mistake at all, it is by too much partiality for the French republicans and in not preserving a neutrality between the parties in France as well as among the belligerent powers; but although he stands at present as high in the admiration and confidence of the people as ever he did, I expect he will find many bitter and desperate enemies arise in consequence of his just judgment against Genet. Besides that a party spirit will convert white into black

and right into wrong, we have, I fear, very corrupt individuals in this country, independent of the common spirit of party. The common movements of ambition every day disclose to me views and hopes and designs that are very diverting, but these I will not commit to paper. They make sometimes a very pretty farce for amusement after the great tragedy or comedy is over. What I write to you must be in sacred confidence and strict discretion.

Mrs. Washington prays me every time I see her to remember her to you very affectionately.

I am, as ever, your

J. A.

LETTER CCXV.

Philadelphia, 2 January, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Our anti-federal scribblers are so fond of rotations that they seem disposed to remove their abuse from me to the President. Bache's paper, which is nearly as bad as Freneau's, begins to join in concert with it to maul the President for his drawing rooms, levees, declining to accept of invitations to dinners and tea parties, his birth day odes, visits, compliments, &c. I may be expected to be an advocate for a rotation of objects of abuse and for equality in this particular. I have held the office of Libellee

General long enough. The burden of it ought to be participated and equalized according to modern republican principles.

The news from France, so glorious for the French army, is celebrated in loud peals of festivity, and elevates the spirits of the enemies of government among us more than it ought, for it will not answer their ends. We shall now see the form of the French republic. Their conventions will have many trials to make before they will come at any thing permanent. The calamities of France are not over. I shall claim the merit of some little accuracy of foresight when I see General Lincoln, who, you remember, was inclined to think the Duke of Brunswick's march to Paris certain, while I was apprehensive that the numerous fortified towns in his way would waste his army and consume the campaign.

We shall soon see the operation in France of elections to first magistracies. My attention is fixed to this object. I have no doubt of its effects; but it is a curious question how long they can last. We have lately seen how they have succeeded in New York, and what effect that election has had upon the votes for President. Cabal, intrigue, manœuvre, as bad as any species of corruption, we have already seen in our elections, and when and where will they stop?

Tenderly,

J. A.

LETTER CCXVI.

Philadelphia, 9 January, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE anxiety you express in your kind letter of 31st December, which I received this morning, for your country and the happiness of your children, is very amiable. The prospects of this country are gloomy, but the situation of all Europe is calamitous beyond all former examples. At what time, and in what manner, and by what means, the disasters which are come, and seem to be coming on mankind, may be averted, I know not. Our own people have been imprudent, as I think, and are now smarting under the effects of their indiscretion; but this, instead of a consolation, is an aggravation of our misfortune. Mr. Genet has been abusive on the President and all his ministers, beyond all measure of decency or obligations of truth, and in other respects not yet publicly investigated, his conduct has been such as to make it difficult to know what to do with him. But I cannot explain myself fully. You must wait for time to bring forth events and *eclaircissements*.

Mrs. Washington always inquires affectionately after your health, and I never forget to present your respects.

The news of this evening is, that the Queen of France is no more. When will savages be satiated

with blood? No prospect of peace in Europe, and therefore none of internal harmony in America. We cannot well be in a more disagreeable situation than we are with all Europe, with all Indians, and with all Barbary rovers. Nearly one half the continent is in constant opposition to the other, and the President's situation, which is highly responsible, is very distressing. He made me a very friendly visit yesterday, which I returned to-day, and had two hours' conversation with him alone in his cabinet. The conversation, which was extremely interesting, and equally affectionate, I cannot explain even by a hint. But his earnest desire to do right and his close application to discover it, his deliberate and comprehensive view of our affairs with all the world, appeared in a very amiable and respectable light. The anti-federalists and the frenchified zealots have nothing now to do that I can conceive of, but to ruin his character, destroy his peace, and injure his health. He supports all their attacks with great firmness, and his health appears to be very good. The Jacobins would make a sortie upon him in all the force they could muster, if they dared.

I run on and say nothing, so I will conclude.

Your ever affectionate

J. A.

LETTER CCXVII.

Philadelphia, 12 January, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

KNOWING your taste for political speculations, I send you a couple of pamphlets for your amusement. The American production is said to have been written by a senator from Virginia, Mr. Taylor; I know not how truly. It is like his style, spirit, opinions, and sentiments.

There is too much foundation for some of his observations; but, although he has told some truth he has not told the whole truth, and he has told something that is not truth. One Bank of the United States, with its branches strictly limited in its operations, would be useful, but the State legislatures have multiplied banks to such a degree that one knows not how far the evil has already gone, nor where it will stop.

LETTER CCXVIII.

Philadelphia, 22 January, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I AM weary of this scene of dulness. We have done nothing and shall do nothing this session, which ought

to be done, unless we should appropriate a sufficient sum of money for treating with the Algerines. We are afraid to go to war, though our inclinations and dispositions are strong enough to join the French republicans. It is happy that our fears are a check to our resentments; and our understandings are better than our hearts.

One day spent at home would afford me more inward delight and comfort than a week or a winter in this place. We have frequent rumors and alarms about the yellow fever, but when they come to be traced to their sources, they have hitherto proved to be false. There is one at present in circulation which is not quite cleared up, and the weather is extremely warm, muggy, foggy, and unfavorable for the season. The river is open and, some say, is never frozen over after this time. Others say there have been instances in the last week in January.

Thomas visits me of evenings, and we converse concerning Hambden and Falkland, Charles and Oliver, Essex and Rupert, of whose characters and conduct he reads every day in Lord Clarendon. I fear he makes too many visits in families where there are young ladies. Time is spent and nothing learned. Pardon me! Disciple of Wolstoncraft! I never relished conversations with ladies, excepting with one at a time, and alone rather than in company. I liked not to lose my time. I begin now to think all time lost that is not employed in farming; innocent, healthy, gay, elegant amusement! Enchanting employ-

ment! how my imagination roves over my rocky mountains, and through my brushy meadows.

Yours, &c.

LETTER CCXIX.

Philadelphia, 9 February, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

So! the tables are turned on the French faction! and the English faction will exult, in their turn, in the prospect of the West India Islands, a conquest to England, the French navy wholly ruined, and insurrection spreading from province to province. Alas! I see no cause of joy in all these exultations in either side. I am compelled to console myself as well as I can.

> "Durum! sed levius fit patientiâ,
> Quidquid corrigere est nefas." [1]

"Est aliquis et dolendi decor: hic sapienti servandus est: et quemadmodum in ceteris rebus, ita et in lacrimis aliquid sat est. Imprudentium ut gaudia, sic dolores exundavere. Aequo animo excipe necessaria." [2]

[1] Horace, book 1, ode 24.
[2] Seneca, Ep. 99.

Don't be impatient for the meaning of these mysteries. Wait till John comes up to translate them.

Indeed and in truth I see no consolation upon these occasions but in stoicism or Christianity. I am no more delighted with the idea of the West Indies in the hands of the English, than I was with Brabant and Flanders in the power of Dumourier.

Yours, affectionately.

LETTER CCXX.

Philadelphia, 9 February, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

VIVE la bagatelle! Dulce est desipere. I have no other resource in my solitude amidst all my gloomy forebodings of the future miseries of my beloved species. Our allies, our only allies, as the demi crazies pathetically call them, have completed their system by turning all their churches into *Je ne scais quoi*, and if they should have any government erected among them either by themselves or others, they may substitute choruses of boys and girls to chant prayers like the Romans —

> "Hic bellum lacrimosum, hic miseram famem
> Pestemque, a populo et principe Cæsare, in
> Persas atque Britannos
> Vestrâ motus aget prece." [1]

[1] Horace, book 1, ode 21.

Their prayers will probably be heard, and war, pestilence and famine may be ready to seize the Austrians and Britons as soon as they have satiated themselves with havock in France. I hope, however, that the awful example of that country, whether it shall be like to those of Tyre and Sidon, Sodom and Gomorrah, or whether it shall terminate less fatally, will be a warning to all other nations and to ours especially. The Britons and Spaniards, by taking the West India Islands, and attempting to hold them, will only lay foundations for future wars to restore them. In short, I see no end of war. It is a comfort to reflect that they can do no greater evil than put an end to their lives.

What think the clergy of New England? What says Mr. Wibird? Do they still admire the French republicans? Do they think them virtuous? Do they wish to see them imitated by all nations? Do they wish to resign all their salaries, and to have their churches all turned into riding houses, the Sabbath abolished, and one day in ten substituted to sing songs to the manes of Marat? O, my soul, come not thou into the secrets of such republicans! The guillotine itself would not make me a sincere republican upon such conditions.

The spirit, principles and system of rational liberty to all nations, is my toast; but I see no tendency to any thing but anarchy, licentiousness and despotism. Mankind will not learn wisdom from experience.

Yours, affectionately,

J. A.

LETTER CCXXI.

Philadelphia, 23 February, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE birth day was celebrated yesterday with as much joy, affection and festivity as ever, and as it happened, the new French minister was then presented. Poor Genet, I fear, is undone. Bad as his conduct has been, I cannot but pity him. What will become of him, I know not. The name of his successor is Fauchet. Gloomy as I was in expectation daily of afflicting news from home, I contented myself with paying my respects to the President with the Senate, but I thought it would not become me to be present at the ball of a Saturday night, especially at a time when I could not get it out of my thoughts that my venerable parent might be closing her eyes forever.

The Senate has been several days trying a contested election of Mr. Gallatin with their doors open. It is at length determined that a gallery is to be built, and our debates public at the next session of Congress. What the effect of this measure, which was at last carried by a great majority, will be, I know not; but it cannot produce greater evils than the contest about it, which was made an engine to render unpopular some of the ablest and most independent members. Some of the younger members may descend from their dignity so far, perhaps, as to court popularity at the expense of justice, truth and wis-

dom, by flattering the prejudices of the audience, but I think they will lose more esteem than they will acquire by such means.

If my mother still lives, present her my duty and tender sympathy under her affliction. I am, with every tender sentiment,

Yours forever,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCXXII.

Philadelphia, 2 March, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE Senate were obliged to spend the whole of the last week, in a solemn trial of the election of Mr. Gallatin, and I find that a great impression has been made upon the public by the learning, eloquence, and reasoning of some of the senators. The decision has given general satisfaction. That popularity was more courted than truth by a few individuals, I fear will be the judgment of some of the most enlightened and independent spectators.

I have again been unfortunate at sea. The vessel in which I shipped my grass seeds and two barrels of rye flour for you, has been run down and sunk in the river by a large ship. Most of the cargo was saved, but whether my adventure was saved or lost, I have not yet learned. The weather to-day has been very

warm, and the snow, which generally covered the earth this morning, is, I presume, nearly gone. The spring will advance with rapid strides, and I shall be impatient to be at home; but I cannot prevail upon myself to ask leave of absence from my post at this critical time, when we know not what questions or events a day may bring forth.

The new French minister, M. Fauchet, is about thirty-three. He is not quite so unreserved as his predecessor, but he seems to me to be in great distress. He was received by the galleries in the theatre with three cheers, but the people have not addressed him or made much noise about him. At the birth-night ball he was placed by the managers on the right hand of the President, which gave great offence to the Spanish commissioners; and it is said Mr. Hammond has left the theatre, offended or disgusted at some partial popular distinctions there. My melancholy anxiety for my mother prevents me from visiting theatres and assemblies, so that I know nothing but by hearsay.

The discussions of last week kept me five or six hours a day in so close a confinement, and the crowd of hearers injured the air so, that I was almost sick; but a day or two of rest has relieved me in some degree. I long for my home, but that is not to be my felicity for some time.

Yours,

J. A.

LETTER CCXXIII.

Philadelphia, 12 March, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE all along flattered myself with hopes that I might with propriety have taken leave of the Senate and returned home as soon as the roads might be settled, but such is the critical state of our public affairs, and I daily hear such doctrines advanced and supported by almost and, sometimes, quite one half of the Senate, that I shall not prevail on myself to abandon my post. This day, the senators were equally divided upon a question, which seemed to me to involve nothing less than peace and war, and I was obliged to decide it, to the no small chagrin of a number. If this country is involved in war, it shall not be by my fault; but if it comes either from the malice of our enemies or the imprudence of our own people, it may perhaps be found that I shall not shrink from its difficulties sooner than some who now seek it in disguise. Business is now carried on with rapidity in both houses, and I shall have a month of severe duty. I have not been absent a day. It is, to be sure, a punishment to hear other men talk five hours every day and not be at liberty to talk at all myself, especially as more than half I hear appears to me very young, inconsiderate, and inexperienced.

The Boston town meeting, as it terminated, did a

service to the public. If government must be affronted or intimidated by popular clubs and partial meetings of the people, it is a pity that our cities are not all as capable as Boston of discussing great questions. But in New York and Philadelphia there is meeting against meeting, and club against club, to the utter confusion of the public opinion.

It is rumored that we are to lose two ministers of state[1] by resignation, but I would not have the report propagated from me. I suffer many melancholy hours on account of my dear mother, and as many on your account. Your trial must be severe, and I often wish I were with you to cheer up your spirits and share a part of your cares. The spring opens, the birds sing, the weather is fine, and all things cheerful, but my thoughts about my home and our public prospects.

Adieu, my dear partner, ever your

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCXXIV.

Philadelphia, 1 April, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

CHEESEMAN has at length arrived, and I have received my trunk in much better order than I expected.

[1] Mr. Hamilton and General Knox, who did not, however, actually retire until the next year.

The people here are much cooler than they were last week. The embargo begins to be felt by many who have been the most noisy and turbulent. Speculation mingles itself in every political operation, and many merchants have already made a noble spec of the embargo by raising their prices; but the foolish tradesmen and laborers, who were so ready to follow the heels of their scheming leaders, are now out of employment, and will lose thirty dollars a head by this embargo. If they had been taxed half the sum to the most necessary and important measure, they would have bitterly complained. I can see little benefit in the embargo, except that it may cool down the courage of such kind of people. It may be expected that we shall soon have a clamor against the renewal of it, if not to have it repealed.

The Assembly of Pennsylvania have this day chosen a senator; Mr. James Ross, of Washington county, in the place of Mr. Gallatin.

A violent measure has been proposed[1] in the House, to sequester all debts due from American citizens to British subjects. Such a motion will do no honor to our country. Such laws are injurious to the debtor as well as the creditor, for they cannot dissolve the contracts. It will not pass the House, and if it did, it would stop in the Senate.

We are rejoiced that the civic feast in Boston succeeded no better. It is astonishing that Mr. A. should

[1] By Mr. Dayton. See Journal of the House of Representatives of the United States, 27th March.

ever have thought of implicating the government in so indecent and hostile a frolic. We have had an incessant struggle all the winter to restrain the intemperate ardor of the people out of doors and their too accurate representatives in both houses. Too many of our good federalists are carried away at times by their passions, and the popular torrent, to concur in motions and countenance sentiments inconsistent with our neutrality and tending directly to war. But I hope we shall be able to make a stand against all fatal attempts.

I long to be at home, but I dare not ask leave to go. The times are too critical for any man to quit his post without the most urgent necessity. Ways and means must be provided to defray the expenses incurred, and I expect this will be put off till May. I shall be very uneasy through this whole month, but I must take patience. I hope Mr. Adams, of Boston, the lawyer, is full of business and making his fortune. I hear so seldom from him, that I must suppose him busy.

Tell my dear mother that I hope to have the pleasure of seeing her in the month of May. Love to my brothers and sister and cousins, &c.

I am most tenderly yours,

J. A.

LETTER CCXXV.

Philadelphia, 3 April, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE post of the day brought me your kind letter of 26th ultimo. The more I am charmed with your bravery and activity in farming, the more I am mortified that my letters in answer to yours are so insignificant and insipid. I must leave all your agriculture to your judgment and the advice of your assistants. I sent you more grass seeds with the furniture, which I hope has arrived before now.

The times are so critical and parties so nearly balanced that I cannot in honor, nor consistently with my duty, abandon my post. There are so many wild projects and motions, and so many to support them, that I am become of more importance than usual, in the opinion of the soundest part of the community. We have very disagreeable business to do in finding ways and means for the expenses we have already incurred. It grieves me to the heart to see an increase of our debts and taxes, and it vexes me to see men opposing even these augmentations, who are every day pushing for measures that must involve us in war, and ten times greater expenses. But the inconsistencies and absurdities of men are no novelties to me.

I have pleased myself with a hope that I should get

home in April, but the general opinion is, we shall be obliged to remain here till the middle of May. I have little expectation of seeing you before election. You are so valorous and noble a farmer that I feel little anxious about agriculture. Manure in hills if you think best, but manure your barley ground and harrow it well. I have now the pleasing hope of seeing my honored mother again in comfortable health. I have suffered many melancholy hours both on her account and yours, and I think myself indebted, under Providence, to your tender care and indefatigable assiduity for the prolongation of her life.

If the yellow fever should make its appearance here, we shall soon fly; but there is no symptom of it as yet. I am sometimes obliged to give critical votes, which expose me to the passions of parties; but I have been wonderfully spared this session. They find it best to let me alone, for I get credit by their abuse. I am, most sincerely and most kindly,

Your

J. A.

LETTER CCXXVI.

Philadelphia, 5 April, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE weather is cooler, and the minds of men are calmed by the enclosed communication; but a soured

party will plunge us [in war] if possible. The most uncandid, the most hypocritical part is acted, to take us in. Protestations against war by those who are pushing every thing that can force war, are not the worst. The southern men have art enough to dupe northern ones to bring forward measures, that the northern part may have the odium of bringing on a war. In short, the knavery of some is so abominable, and the stupidity of others so contemptible, that I am almost brought to Raynal's wish.[1] The old debtors to Britain uniting with those who are bribed to France, and both operating upon the populaces of our great towns, will devote this country to calamities as unnecessary as they will be dismal, unless the vigilance and patience of those who have no object but their country's good is supported by the sound part of the people out of doors.

My good and worthy son, I presume, sees all I send you. All my hopes are in him, both for my family and country.

Yours, most affectionately,

J. A.

[1] "Raynal prayed that, rather than men should always be knaves and fools, the species might be annihilated. At present it seems in a fair way to be so. I love them too well, with all their faults, to be glad to see their present rapid progress towards destruction. All that I have and all that I am would I cheerfully give to prevent it; but I see no means. Havock must have its perfect work, and then eyes will begin to open." Extract of a letter, alluding to the French revolution, dated 15 March, not published.

LETTER CCXXVII.

Philadelphia, 7 April, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your favor of the 28th ultimo arrived this morning. Before this time I hope you have received your furniture.

We are still endeavoring to preserve peace; but one[1] moves a series of commercial regulations, another,[2] a sequestration of debts, a third,[3] to prohibit all intercourse with Britain, a fourth, to issue letters of marque against Algerines, all tending to excite suspicions in Britain that we are hostile to her, and mean ultimately to join her enemies. One firebrand is scarcely quenched before another is thrown in; and if the sound part of the community is not uncommonly active and attentive to support us, we shall be drawn off from our neutral ground and involved in incomprehensible evils. In danger of a war that will be unnecessary, if not unjust, that has no public object in view, that must be carried on with allies the most dangerous that ever existed, my situation is as disagreeable as any I ever knew. I should have no fear of an honest war, but a knavish one would fill me with disgust and abhorrence.

[1] Mr. Madison.
[2] Mr. Dayton.
[3] Mr. Clark, of New Jersey.

At nine o'clock at night I suppose your election is over, and another fortnight will enable us to guess whether an Adams or a Cushing is to be the great man. Although the old gentleman's conduct is not such as I can approve in many things of late years, yet I find it difficult to believe that the people of Massachusetts will forsake him in his last moments. Alas! his grandeur must be of short duration, if it ever commences. I shall be happier at home, if Cushing succeeds; and the State, I believe, will be more prudently conducted.

The federalists have ventured on a dangerous manœuvre. I am afraid the delicacy which has usually attended elections in New England will be injured if not destroyed by these elections of governors and senators, so as to be never regained even in the choice of representatives. But we must fulfil our destiny. I am afraid I shall not see you till election. I never longed more to be at home.

Yours, most tenderly,

J. A.

LETTER CCXXVIII.

Philadelphia, 15 April, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE House yesterday passed a resolution[1] in committee of the whole, whose depth is to me unfathomable. The Senate will now be called upon to show their independence, and perhaps your friend to show his weakness or his strength. The majority of the House is certainly for mischief, and there is no doubt they represent the people in the southern States and a large number in the northern. *Vox populi*, *vox Dei*, they say, and so it is, sometimes; but it is sometimes the voice of Mahomet, of Cæsar, of Catiline, the Pope and the Devil. Britain, however, has done much amiss, and deserves all that will fall thereon. Her insolence, which you and I have known and felt more than any other Americans, will lead her to ruin and us half way. We, indeed, are, in point of insolence, her very image and superscription, as true a game cock as she, and I warrant you, shall become as great a scourge to mankind.

Our furniture has had its last removal. Your dis-

[1] This was the motion alluded to in the preceding letter, made by Mr. Clark, to prohibit all intercourse with Great Britain. It was ultimately adopted, in a modified form, by a majority of twenty in the House of Representatives, and was only rejected in the Senate by the casting vote of the Vice President, Mr. Adams.

tress and distraction at its landing are very strongly described. Whatever crashes have happened shall be the last from removals. My countrymen are going into a career that I shall not long follow. I don't expect another election, if I should, peradventure, ride out the remainder of my term. I long to see you, but I fear it will be late in May if not the beginning of June.

I am, with ardent gratitude and affection,

Your

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCXXIX.

Philadelphia, 19 April, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

SENATE has been three days in debate upon the appointment of Mr. Jay to go to London. It has this day been determined in his favor eighteen versus eight.

You cannot imagine what horror some persons are in, lest peace should continue. The prospect of peace throws them into distress. Their countenances lengthen at the least opening of an appearance of it. Glancing gleams of joy beam from their faces whenever all possibility of it seems to be cut off. You can divine the secret source of these feelings as well as I. The opposition to Mr. Jay has been quickened

by motives which always influence every thing in an elective government. Pretexts are never wanting to ingenious men, but the views of all the principal parties are always directed to the election of the first magistrate. If Jay should succeed, it will recommend him to the choice of the people for President, as soon as a vacancy shall happen. This will weaken the hopes of the southern States for Jefferson. This I believe to be the secret motive of the opposition to him, though other things were alleged as ostensible reasons; such as, his monarchical principles, his indifference about the navigation of the Mississippi, his attachment to England, his aversion to France, none of which are well founded, and his holding the office of Chief Justice, &c.

The day is a good omen. May the gentle zephyrs waft him to his destination, and the blessing of heaven succeed his virtuous endeavors to preserve peace. I am so well satisfied with this measure, that I shall run the venture to ask leave to go home, if Congress determines to sit beyond the middle of May.

Mr. Adams is to be Governor, it seems, by a great majority of the people; and I am not surprised at it. I should have thought human nature dead in the Massachusetts if it had been otherwise. I expect now he will be less anti-federal. Gill is to be Lieutenant. We will go to Princeton again to congratulate him. I thought, however, that Gerry would have been the man.

We are ill-treated by Britain, and you and I know it is owing to a national insolence against us. If they

force us into a war, it is my firm faith, that they will be chastised for it a second time, worse than the first. I am, with an affection too tender to be expressed,

Your

J. A.

LETTER CCXXX.

Philadelphia, 5 May, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I MUST remain here, because my friends say I must not go. Those whose principles are the same with mine, whose views of public good coincide with mine, say that if we keep together, we shall succeed to the end of the session as we have hitherto done, in keeping off all the most pernicious projects.

The ways and means before the House of Representatives is a very important and a very difficult system. While I confess the necessity of it, and see its importance in giving strength to our government at home and consideration to our country abroad, I lament the introduction of taxes and expenses which will accumulate a perpetual debt and lead to future revolutions.

I regret every moment I lose here, but I cannot yet be sure that I can see you before June.

With the utmost tenderness of affection,

J. A.

LETTER CCXXXI.

Philadelphia, 10 May, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We go on as usual, Congress resolving one thing and the democratical societies resolving the contrary ; the President doing what is right, and clubs and mobs resolving it to be all wrong.

We had in Senate, a few days ago, the greatest curiosity of all. The senators from Virginia moved, in consequence of an instruction from their constituents, that the execution of the fourth article of the treaty of peace, relative to *bona fide* debts, should be suspended, until Britain should fulfil the seventh article. When the question was put, fourteen voted against it, two only, the Virginia delegates, for it, and all the rest, but one, ran out of the room to avoid voting at all, and that one excused himself. This is the first instance of the kind.

The motion disclosed the real object of all the wild projects and mad motions which have been made during the whole session. O! liberty. O! my country. O! debt, and O! sin? These debtors are the persons who are continually declaiming against the corruption of Congress. Impudence! thy front is brass.

The House is upon ways and means, which will take us the rest of the month, I fear.

Yours, as ever, J. A.

LETTER CCXXXII.

Philadelphia, 17 May, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE long continuance of the session, and the uncommon heat and drought of the weather, have made this to me an unpleasant spring, and to increase my mortification, I have this week received no letter from you. I have not, for several months before, failed to receive a delicious letter, worth a dozen of mine, once a week.

Well! Boston comes on. Mr. M. is now to be its leader. How changed in reputation since 1788! I wonder not at the choice of Well-born Winthrop. He might, I suppose, have been chosen at any time. His father was one of my best friends, and the son was a good son of liberty. I know of nothing to his disadvantage. The federalists committed an egregious blunder in a very unwarrantable and indecent attempt, I had almost said, upon the freedom of elections, at their previous meeting for the choice of governor. The opposite party, to be sure, practise arts nearly as unwarrantable in secret, and by sending agents with printed votes. But this is no justification, unless upon Cato's principle: In corrupta civitate corruptio est licita; i. e., in a corrupt city, corruption is lawful. Elections are going the usual way in our devoted country. O! that I had done with them.

We shall realize the raving in the Tempest, which C. quoted to me in his last letter:

> "I' the Commonwealth" we shall "by contraries
> Execute all things; for no kind of traffic
> Shall we admit; no name of magistrate;
> Letters will not be known; wealth, poverty
> And use of service, none; contract, succession,
> Bourn, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none;
> No use of metal, corn, or wine, or oil;
> No occupation; all men idle, all;
> And women too; but *innocent and pure;*
> No sovereignty:
> All things in common nature should produce
> Without sweat or endeavor; treason, felony,
> Sword, pike, knife, gun, or need of any engine,
> Would I not have; but nature should bring forth
> Of its own kind, all foizon, all abundance,
> To feed my innocent people."

This is lubberland, indeed. *Le pays de Cocagne*, I believe the French call it; but it is *terra incognita.* I am afraid we shall have too many of its qualities without its innocence.

I have no hope of Congress rising, before the last of May. Never in my life did I long to see you more.

I am, most ardently, your

J. A.

LETTER CCXXXIII.

Philadelphia, 26 May, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I SHALL enclose with this some letters between Randolph and Hammond, which will show you how quarrelsome they are. Poor fellows! They both desire peace, but think themselves obliged to wrangle for their countries. It is fashionable to charge wars upon kings, but I think "le peuple souverain" is as inflammable and as proud, and at the same time less systematic, uniform, and united, so that it is not easy for them to avoid wars. We have labored very hard to preserve our tranquillity, but the peuple souverain is continually committing some intemperance or indiscretion or other, tending to defeat all our precautions. If we are involved in a war, my head, heart and hands shall be guiltless of the crime of provoking it. But it will be my duty to submit to the legal voice and decree of my country.

We have fine rains here for three days past, and I hope you enjoy a similar blessing. I shall take leave on Saturday, 31st of May, but cannot hope to get home before the 10th or 12th of June. The journey lies before me like a mountain. I am too old and too feeble for these long journeys, dry sessions, and uncomfortable scenes. I am at an age when I ought to be at home with my family.

I wish you an agreeable election. Who will be Lieutenant Governor, Gill or Gerry ? I wrote to Dr. Willard, sometime ago, a resignation of the chair of the Academy of Arts and Sciences. It would be a farce for me to hold it any longer. My duty to my mother. Tell my brother that I suppose he was for war to make himself popular ; but I am very sorry to find that warlike sentiments are popular in Quincy. I am glad he is chosen, however, and hope he will get our town back to the county of Suffolk.

Adieu, my dearest friend, adieu.

LETTER CCXXXIV.

Philadelphia, 27 May, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

It is proper that I should apprize you that the President has it in contemplation to send your son to Holland, that you may recollect yourself and prepare for the event. I make this communication to you in confidence, at the desire of the President, communicated to me yesterday by the Secretary of State. You must keep it an entire secret until it shall be announced to the public in the journal of the Senate. But our son must hold himself in readiness to come to Philadelphia to converse with the President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, &c., and

receive his commissions and instructions without loss of time. He will go to Providence in the stage, and thence to New York by water, and thence to Philadelphia in the stage. He will not set out, however, until he is informed of his appointment. Perhaps the Senate may negative him and then his journey will be unnecessary.

I shall go in the stage on Saturday to New York and be at home, I hope, by the 12th of June.

Adieu.

J. A.

LETTER CCXXXV.

Philadelphia, 15 November, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

My vote, I believe, will never be again given for an adjournment of Congress to an earlier day than that which is designated by the constitution, because I find that gentlemen cannot conveniently leave their plantations and professions in season to be here sooner. A fortnight has been already lost and we have no certainty of making a Senate on Monday.

By the papers that wrap Dumouriez's Memoirs, you will see the drooping state of a silly and wicked rebellion.[1] Lee, assisted by Hamilton perhaps, ap-

[1] The insurrection in the western counties of Pennsylvania.

pears with dignity, moderation and decision. The triumph of Smith, Ames, and Dexter, is very exhilarating to the friends of peace, and equally mortifying to the unblushing advocates of confusion.

I am more conveniently quartered than I ever was before, since my family left this town.

My love and duty, &c.,

J. A.

LETTER CCXXXVI.

Philadelphia, 17 November, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

YESTERDAY I attended the dedication of a temple. The Presbyterian congregation in Market street have taken down their old meeting house and erected a new one in the same place, much larger, higher, more light, airy and elegant. They assembled in it for the first time yesterday, when Dr. Ewing preached in the morning, and Dr. Blair in the afternoon.

I recollected with pleasure, upon this occasion, the course of sermons delivered in rotation by the ministers of Boston in the new church in Brattle street, and Philadelphia got nothing by the comparison. Dr. Blair, however, entertained us with an elegant and sublime discourse, in which, among other good things, he gave Tom Paine a hearty reprobation.

I dined at Mr. O's. All well. I hope to receive a

line to-day. A journal or diurnal register of farming would be very, very refreshing and entertaining. O! the tedious solitude that awaits me for three or four months amidst the noise, smoke, wealth, luxury, eloquence, learning, wit and wisdom, of this proud city and our venerable Congress! To me, one week of domestic felicity and rural amusement would be worth it all.

LETTER CCXXXVII.

[Philadelphia,] 19 November, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

The President's speech is so important to the public, that I know you will be anxious to see it as early as possible. When the answers of the two Houses come to be debated, we shall see whether there are any apologists for rebellion in these sanctuaries.

As Mr. Edwards of Kentucky appeared in Senate to-day, we can do business if one member should be sick, but it will be very inconvenient to have so small a majority. Mr. Potts of Maryland, and Mr. Taylor of Virginia have resigned. The Senate seems really to be too small a body[1] for so important a branch of the legislature of so great a people.

I feel, where I am, the want of the society of Mr.

[1] The Senate consisted of thirty members at this time.

O.'s family, but much more that of my own. I pore upon my family at Quincy, my children in Europe, and my children and grandchildren in New York, till I am melancholy, and wish myself a private man. That event, however, would not relieve me, for my thoughts would be at the Hague and at New York, if I was at Quincy. Your meditations cannot be more cheerful than mine, and your visit to our afflicted sister will not, I fear, brighten your views or soften your anxiety. I hope we shall be supported, but there is no plan that occurs to me, that can relieve us from our solicitude. We must repose ourselves upon those principles in which we were educated, and which, I hope, we have never renounced nor relinquished.

I would resign my office and remain with you, or I would bring you next winter with me, but either of these plans, the public out of the question, would increase our difficulties, perhaps, rather than lessen them. This climate is disease to me, and I greatly fear would be worse to you, in the present state of your health. Mrs. Jay, poor lady, is more distressed than we are. I pray you to take care of your health and of L—'s too. She is a good girl: but I sometimes wish she would run about a little more, if it was even to look at the young men.

Adieu,

J. A.

LETTER CCXXXVIII.

Philadelphia, 23 November, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

It is a common observation of old people, that as they advance in life, time appears to run off faster, and the year grows shorter. I cannot, I am sure, say the same of the time which has passed of late. I took possession of this chamber on the eighth of this month, and the time has seemed at least as long to me, as any fifteen days of my whole life. Tedious days and lonesome nights! I am weary of ye!

Enclosed is the address of the Senate and the President's reply. You will be pleased with both, but wry faces, and shrill voices enough will be seen and heard in the House, the cities and in some places in the country. What do you make of the intelligence from France? They seem to be weary of clubs, but as yet unable to do without them. The explosion of their powder works and men seems as desperate as dreadful. Dreadful, awful revenge, I expect, will be practised in a thousand ways; and as revenge excites revenge, where will it stop? They seem at present to be unable to confine their enemies, or to set them at liberty. Sin and death seem to have deserted the place where Milton saw them, and taken their abode in Paris.

I did not expect any letter from you last week, be-

cause of your visit to Haverhill, and I was not disappointed, but if I should not receive one this week I should be mortified.

The spirit in the two Houses has hitherto appeared well disposed to support the government, but whether the House will venture to censure a great number of their constituents so freely as the President and Senate have done, I know not. Mr. Madison and Mr. Scott upon the committee would not admit the clause into their report, and whether the House will insert it is not yet certain. An army of fifteen thousand militia so easily raised from four States only, to go upon such an enterprise ought to be a terrible phenomenon to anti-federal citizens as well as to insolent Britons. If our old stepmother continues to provoke us, till our patience is exhausted, she will soon see mischief to her dominions in America. But they will cost us infinitely more than they are worth.

Adieu.

J. A.

LETTER CCXXXIX.

Philadelphia, 5 December, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I RETURNED this day the visit of the *çi-devant* Duc de Liancourt. He is a sensible man. He is cousin german of the late Duc de la Rochefoucauld, and in-

herited his estate and, for what I know, his titles, but neither the estate nor the titles are of any use at present. What will be the future destiny of these high personages is a curious problem. I endeavored to impress upon him as I have upon all other Frenchmen, the necessity of an independent senate in France, incapable of being warped by ministers of state on one hand, or by popular demagogues on the other.

I begin now to entertain hopes of soon hearing from our sons, to whom I have written by Mr. Greenleaf.

This session of Congress is the most innocent I ever knew. We have done no harm. The English are so beaten and the French so triumphant, that I wonder there are not some projects for war. But it seems popularity is not now to be gotten by spirit.

I know not what to write to you, unless I tell you I love you and long to see you; but this will be no news. I wish I had a farm here. I would give you my chronicles of husbandry in return for yours. Three long months before I can see you. Oh! what to do with myself I know not.

My duty to my mother, and love to brothers and sisters and cousins. Mr. Morris inquired of me the character of William Cranch. Be sure I gave him a good one. How is Mr. Wibird's health, and Mr. Quincy's?

Adieu.

J. A.

LETTER CCXL.

Philadelphia, 14 December, 1794.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

ALTHOUGH the weather is the most beautiful I ever knew in December, the time seems longer to me than ever any time did in America. The business of Congress this session is dulness, flatness, and insipidity itself.

I have been much engaged in reading the trials of Muir, Margarot, Watt, Downie, and Walker. Mr. Walker, of Manchester, appears to have been very ill used by the church party; but he was honorably acquitted. The others, I suppose, could not be held guiltless according to the laws of Scotland and England. The severity, however, of their sentences may excite rather than suppress discontent and mutiny. Self-created societies must be circumspect. It is very easy for them to trangress the boundaries of law, and as soon as they do, they become unlawful assemblies, seditious societies, mischievous conventions, pernicious associations, dangerous and destructive combinations, and as many such hard appellations as you choose to give them. I take it for granted that political clubs must and ought to be lawful in every free country. I belonged to several in my youth, and I wish I could belong to one now. It would save me from *ennui* of an evening, which now

torments me as bad as the blue devils would if I had them, which, by the way, I never had, and so can't say by experience. Low spirits and blue devils are not the same.

I think I will read Swedenborg's works. I dare say they are as entertaining as the Pilgrim's Progress, or Robinson Crusoe, or the Seven Champions. Any thing that shows a strong and strange imagination, and is neither melancholy nor stark mad, is amusing. I fear the atheistical and theistical philosophers, lately turned politicians, will drive the common people into receptacles of visionaries, enluminées, illuminées, &c., &c., &c., for the common people will undoubtedly insist upon the risk of being damned rather than give up the hope of being saved in a future state. The people will have a life to come and so will I.

I fear you will think me a little crazy, so I conclude. I send you a history of Geneva.

Adieu.

LETTER CCXLI.

Philadelphia, 1 January, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I WISH you a happy new year, and a repetition of happy new years as long as time shall endure; not here below, because I shall want you in another country, better than this.

What do you say ? Shall I keep a national thanksgiving with you ? I hope, before that day, we shall have good news from all our family, though we cannot be all together.

Compliments of the season to L., and all my good friends. Don 't forget my farm next time you write. I hope to find a letter at the Senate chamber.

Adieu.

LETTER CCXLII.

Philadelphia, 5 January, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

By this day's post I have your letter of the 26th ultimo. I believe that some incomprehensible sympathy or other, made me low-spirited all the time you were sick, though I neither knew nor suspected it. I rejoice to be informed of your recovery. If I were not afraid of every change in your situation that might endanger your health, I would plan a project for next winter ; but I must leave that for a *tête à tête.*

To a heart that loves praise so well, and receives so little of it, your letter is like laudanum, which Mr. Henry the senator, says, is the Divinity itself.

The French Convention has passed a number of resolutions for the regulation of Jacobinical clubs or self-created societies, founded in eternal reason,

perpetual policy and perfect justice, which every other nation must adopt or be overthrown. I wish Mr. O. and every other minister would preach a sermon, once a quarter, expressly on that text. Affiliations, combinations, correspondences, corporate acts of such societies must be prohibited. A snake with one head at each end, crawling opposite ways, must split the snake in two, unless one head is so much stronger than the other as to drag it along over thorns and stones till it loses its headship. So the King of France's constitution acted. A man drawn between two horses is a neat image of a nation drawn between its government and self-created societies acting as corporations and combining together.

Hay for the horses I know you must purchase, and I always expected it. Buy the best and enough of it. The weather is here this day as fine as you describe the day before Christmas, when our friends were so good as to visit you, bright, clear, mild; farmers ploughing every where. Letters from Connecticut say the cankerworm millers, and slugs, are going up the apple trees. Tar our trees in the garden and see if you catch any.

There is an unusual calm and dearth of news at present. Most important events are expected to be imported by the first vessels. I am myself much inclined to doubt whether the French will get to Amsterdam. There are obstacles in their way very serious and which may be made invincible. Amsterdam may be defended by an inundation. Even without an inundation, it is capable of a good defence.

A strong wall, a wide, deep ditch, a numerous artillery, and I am not willing to believe that the people are asleep or will be idle. I am, with the tenderest of all sentiments,

Ever yours,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCXLIII.

Philadelphia, 29 January, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE public prints announce the death of my old, esteemed friend General Roberdeau, whose virtues in heart-searching times endeared him to Philadelphia and to his country. His friendly attention to me when Congress held their sessions at Yorktown, I can never forget, and it excites a more lively interest in his loss than that of some others who have lately gone before him.

Mr. King is re-elected by the legislature of New York, by a majority of five in the house and two in the senate, in opposition to Mr. Tillotson, whom you know to have married a sister of Chancellor Livingston. This is a great point gained. Mr. Jay, Chancellor Livingston, Mr. Burr, Mr. Yates, and Mr. Hamilton, are mentioned as successors to Governor Clinton, who has resigned. Mr. Jay, if he should not return, will not run very fast. Mr. Hamilton, it is

said, will not serve. Chancellor will stand no chance, as I hear, and it is doubted whether Burr or Yates will prevail. We are still at uncertainties whether Mr. Jay, or despatches from him, will arrive before the fourth of March, which makes me still dubious whether it will be right for me to go away. I am most earnestly and ardently desirous of it, but will it do ?

Mrs. Washington is very happy at present in a visit from her two granddaughters, N.'s sisters, as I suppose they are. One of them is a fine, blooming, rosy girl, who, I dare say, has had more liberty and exercise than Nelly. I dined yesterday at Mr. Morris's, whose hospitality is always precious. A company of venerable old rakes of us, threescore years of age, or a little over or a little under, sat smoking cigars, drinking Burgundy and Madeira, and talking politics till almost eleven o'clock. This will do once in a great while, not often for me.

In Senate, we have no feelings this session. All is cool. No passions, no animation in debate. I never sat in any public assembly so serenely. What storm may be preparing I know not. A great calm at sea, or an uncommonly fine day at land, is called a weather-breeder. But if Jay's despatches don't arrive, we shall have no tempestuous weather this session. I wish you a pleasant thanksgiving, though I fear I shall not be with you according to my wishes. Adieu.

Instead of an additional snow and a return of cold, as I hoped this morning, we have now a warm

and plentiful rain, which is melting the snow and spoiling the sleighing. I hope you have more snow, more steady cold, and good sledding. The post today brought me no letter. I don 't always very sanguinely look for a letter on Thursday. I should be inconsolable on a disappointment, on Monday.

LETTER CCXLIV.

Philadelphia, 2 February, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THIS morning I received your favor of the 21st of January. I am sure your people do a great deal of work, so don 't be concerned. I am very well satisfied with your agricultural diary.

The venerable governor made the best speech he ever made, but the old leven ferments a little in it. I wonder you had not received two letters from T., which I enclosed to you. I now enclose you one from Mr. Jay, which shows that our sons were arrived in Holland, and had passed through their ceremonies at the Hague, and gone to Amsterdam to look, as I suppose, after the imprudent Van Staphorst and American money in his hands.

The enclosed postscript to Dunlap will show you that the expectation of a treaty hourly to arrive, will not allow me to leave my chair till the fourth of March. I shall be charged with deserting the Presi-

dent, forsaking the Secretary of State, betraying my friend Jay, abandoning my post, and sacrificing my country to a weak attachment to a woman, and a weaker fondness for my farm, if I quit at this moment. So, be thou thankful alone, that thou hast a good husband here, that thy children are safe and in honor in Europe, and that thy daughter has given thee a fine grand-daughter; besides innumerable blessings to thy country. I will be thankful and joyous here all alone.

We momently expect the treaty; but it may not arrive this month. When it does, I expect to see wry faces as well as smiling ones. Perhaps much debate may take place. Let us know what it is first, however, before we oppose, or criticise, or applaud, or approve. Your son John says it is better than war. That is all I know about it.

Tenderly adieu.

LETTER CCXLV.

Philadelphia, 15 February, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

This is the coldest day we have felt this winter, and if it were not for the hope I have of a letter from you to-morrow, I should freeze, for what I know, to-night. This month has been all unpleasant weather, but none severe. You have had a north-east storm, I

perceive, which raised the tides, but I hope, brought in a fresh and abundant supply of seaweed.

It is the dullest time we have seen this winter. No arrivals, no news from abroad, nor from any part of our own country. The treaty appears not, and when it will, no man can tell. Are we to wait here till May for it? I won't. There is not the smallest reason for my waiting. I can, in no possible case, have any voice in its ratification, as two thirds of the senators must agree. Nor will any opinion or reasoning of mine have the smallest weight with any one of the senators. If I were disposed to wait, how long must I wait? I am tired of reading and writing. My eyes complain; I want exercise; I must have my horse; and I must be at home. You say I must stay a few days at New York; but I shall be uneasy and impatient. No business, no books, no amusement, no society much suited to my taste. Good cheer is not enough for me. Balls, assemblies, hunting, are neither business, pleasure, nor diversion for me. What do you say, shall I resign my office when I am three-score, or will you come with me in a stage wagon, and lodge at a tavern in Fourth street? I must contrive something new against next winter. The old routine grows too insipid.

I shall never be weary of my old wife, however; so declares

Your affectionate husband,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCXLVI.

Philadelphia, 9 June, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE Senate assembled yesterday at eleven, twenty-five members present.[1] The new senators were sworn, and a committee waited on the President, who immediately sent a message with the treaty, which was read, together with part of a volume of negotiations which accompanied it. Mr. Butler and Mr. Green arrived last night, as I hear, so that we shall be very full.

I can form no conjecture of the time when the Senate will adjourn. The President and lady, and Miss Nelly, make many kind inquiries concerning you and Mrs. Smith, &c. &c.

Your curiosity, I doubt not, is all alive. But — mum — mum — mum.

Enclosed is a mysterious poem for your amusement.

Yours, as ever,

J. A.

[1] This was a special meeting of the Senate, called for the purpose of acting upon Mr. Jay's treaty.

LETTER CCXLVII.

Philadelphia, 9 June, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE Senate are now in possession of the budget. It is a bone to gnaw for the aristocrats as well as the democrats, and while I am employed in attending the digestion of it, I send you enclosed an amusement which resembles it only in name. I can form no judgment when the process will be over. We must wait with patience.

I dined yesterday, in the family way, with the President. He told me that the American minister at the Hague had been very regular and intelligent in his correspondence. The whole family made the usual inquiries concerning you and sent you the usual compliments.

Be very careful, my dearest friend, of what you say, in that circle and city.[1] The times are perilous.

J. A.

[1] Mrs. Adams was in New York.

LETTER CCXLVIII.

Philadelphia, 14 June, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

It is painful to feel an impulse to write where there is nothing to say. I write merely to let you know that I am alive and not sick. The weather has been cold for several days, which is more tolerable, at least to me, than the heat which we suffered for a day or two the beginning of the week past. The new French minister is arrived. Whether he has any budget to disclose has not yet appeared.

Mr. Jay is in fine spirits and his health improves. I should suppose he will remain here till the fate of his treaty is determined, which we hope, with some doubts however, will happen before the end of this week. Twenty-nine senators attended yesterday, and the thirtieth is expected to-morrow. We shall meet for the future at an earlier hour in the morning. The deliberations have been temperate, grave, decent and wise hitherto, and the results judicious. My absence from home at this season would be less distressing or rather less insipid, if my presence here was more necessary, or indeed of any utility, but to the mortification of separation from my family and affairs at a time when they would be most agreeable to me, is added the consciousness that I can do no good to others any more than to myself. I have no voice,

and although the fate of the treaty will not be justly imputable to me in any degree, yet there is reason to expect that many will suspect me and others charge me with a greater share of it than would belong to me if I had a voice. All these things terrify me little.

A Mr. Millar, a son of a Professor Millar of Glasgow, known by his "Historical view of the English Government" last night brought me a letter of introduction and recommendation from Dr. Kippis, who desires his "sincere respects to every part of my family." In the midst of the desolations of Europe, he "rejoices in the prosperity of America, and in the wisdom and moderation of its two chief Governors." So much for compliment. Moderation, however, is approved only by the moderate, who are commonly but a few. The many commonly delight in something more piquant and lively. I am, with desires rather immoderate to be going home with you,

Your's forever,

J. A.

Monday, 15 June, 1795.

Yesterday I dined at Mr. Bingham's with a large company. While at table a servant came to me with a message from Mr. Law, who desired to speak with me in the anti-chamber. I went out to him and found that he wanted to enquire of me concerning a young lady of amiable manners and elegant education, whom Mr. Law and Mr. Greenleaf had found

in Maryland, in great distress and a little disarranged, and brought with them to Philadelphia. She is connected with families in Marblehead. I knew nothing of her. Governor Bradford says she has been some weeks in Rhode Island. I sent Mr. Law to Mr. Cabot.

Mr. Brown came in yesterday. He keeps with all the horses at the Rising Sun, between the fourth and fifth milestone in the country, at Mr. John Dove's. His horses are in fine order, but I shall not be in a condition to use them this week, I fear.

LETTER CCXLIX.

Philadelphia, 19 June, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

LAST night the Consul General, de l'Etombe, made me a visit with your kind letter of the 18th. He looks older than when I last saw him, and he is indeed a fortunate man. He gave me many details of affairs in France; a gloomy picture of the reign of terror, and a smiling one of the present reign of moderation; but he is not without inquietude on the subject of a constitution.

By the turn which the debates and deliberations in the Senate took yesterday, we must sit next week, and I have now little hope of liberty till the last day

of it. Some members, perhaps, wish to give time to Mr. Adet to open his budget, which, it is conjectured, may contain propositions on the part of France.

The sun is terrible here as well as at New York. I beg you to be afraid of him, and keep out of his beams. I dread going out to Lansdowne to dinner at Mr. Morris's, on Sunday, according to his invitation.

The news you mention from Halifax is very disagreeable. I wish that misfortune and adversity could soften the temper and humiliate the insolence of John Bull; but he is not yet sufficiently humbled. If I mistake not, it is to be the destiny of America one day to beat down his pride. But the irksome task will not soon, I hope, be forced upon us.

All this is under the rose. My love to the family.

J. A.

LETTER CCL.

[Philadelphia,] Monday morning,
28 December, 1795.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE just received from the post office your letter of the 20th by Briesler, who went to carry one for you. I write by every post, i. e., by Monday's and Thursday's, which are the only ones on which mails are made up for any place beyond New York, and the only

ones on which letters arrive here from any place beyond that city.

Mrs. Adams, your new daughter, behaves prettily in her new sphere. I dined with them one day, and promised to take my lodgings with them the next time.[1] Mrs. Adams showed me an elegant bed, which she politely said she had made up for me. As to the details in which you say the ladies excel us, I have not patience. I, who have the patience of Job, have not patience to write letters in the style of Grandison and Lovelace. You would admire to see with what serenity and intrepidity I commonly sit and hear. Not all the froth can move my contempt, not all the sedition stir my indignation, nor all the nonsense and delirium excite my pity. If dignity consists in total insensibility, I believe my countenance has it. B., however, tells me he can always perceive when I don 't like any thing. It must be by reasoning from what he knows to be my opinion. My countenance shows nothing, for the most part. Sometimes I believe it may be legible enough. The reflections upon peace, by Madame de Stael, are not here.

The President and Presidentess always send their regards to you. Madame invites you to come next summer to Mount Vernon and visit the federal city. I am almost afraid to write it to you for fear it should turn your head, and give you thoughts and hopes of accepting the invitation. I told Madame la Presidente that, after the year 1800, when Congress should

[1] At New York, where Mr. Adams's second son resided.

sit at Washington, and that city became very great, I thought it not impossible that you and your sister Cranch might seriously entertain such a project, for the sake of making a visit to Mount Vernon as well as seeing Mrs. Cranch's grandchildren.

Always write me how Mrs. Briesler and her children are. It makes the good man's countenance shine so bright when I tell him of it, that I take a great pleasure in reading these paragraphs to him. My mother I am anxious to hear of. My duty to her, and love, compliments, &c., &c., to whom you please.

Always yours,

J. A.

LETTER CCLI.

Philadelphia, 7 January, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

ENCLOSED is another production of Porcupine, whose quills will stick.

> "And Midas now neglected stands
> With ass's ears and dirty hands."

The President appears great in Randolph's vindication[1] throughout, excepting that he wavered about

[1] Edmund Randolph, Secretary of State, implicated by an

signing the treaty, which he ought not to have done one moment. Happy is the country to be rid of Randolph ; but where shall be found good men and true to fill the offices of government ? There seems to be a necessity of distributing the offices about the States in some proportion to their numbers ; but, in the southern part of the Union, false politics have struck their roots so deep that it is very difficult to find gentlemen who are willing to accept of public trusts, and, at the same time, capable of discharging them. The President offered the office of state to several gentlemen who declined : to Mr. Patterson, Mr. King, Mr. Henry of Virginia, Mr. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, of South Carolina, and three others whose names I don' t recollect.[1] He has not been able to find any one to accept the war office. The expenses of living at the seat of government are so exorbitant, so far beyond all proportion to the salaries, and the sure reward of integrity in the discharge of public functions is such obloquy, contempt, and insult, that no man of any feeling is willing to renounce his home, forsake his property and profession, for the sake of removing to Philadelphia, where he is almost sure of disgrace

intercepted letter of Fauchet, the French minister, in a manner that has never been cleared up.

[1] A singular proof of the moderate views of the most distinguished men of the country at this time. It does not, however, appear from the writings of Washington, that Mr. King was one of the persons applied to. Thomas Johnson, of Maryland, was. And if there were others, the application must have been informally made.

and ruin. Where these things will end I know not. In perfect secrecy between you and me, I must tell you that I now believe the President will retire. The consequence to me is very serious, and I am not able, as yet, to see what my duty will demand of me. I shall take my resolutions with cool deliberation. I shall watch the course of events with more critical attention than I have done for some time, and what Providence shall point out to be my duty, I shall pursue with patience and decision. It is no light thing to resolve upon retirement. My country has claims, my children have claims, and my own character has claims upon me; but all these claims forbid me to serve the public in disgrace. Whatever any one may think, I love my country too well to shrink from danger in her service, provided I have a reasonable prospect of being able to serve her to her honor and advantage. But if I have reason to think that I have either a want of abilities or of public confidence to such a degree as to be unable to support the government in a higher station, I ought to decline it. But in that case, I ought not to serve in my present place under another, especially if that other should entertain sentiments so opposite to mine as to endanger the peace of the nation. It will be a dangerous crisis in public affairs if the President and Vice President should be in opposite boxes.

These lucubrations must be confined to your own bosom. But I think, upon the whole, the probability is strong that I shall make a voluntary retreat, and spend the rest of my days, in a very humble style,

with you. Of one thing I am very sure — it would be to me the happiest portion of my whole life.

I am, with unabatable affection,

Yours,

J. A.

LETTER CCLII.

Philadelphia, 20 January, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

This is one of my red letter days. It is the anniversary of the signature of the declaration of an armistice between the United States and Great Britain in 1783. There are several of these days in my calendar, which I recollect as they pass in review, but which nobody else remembers. And, indeed, it is no otherwise worth my while to remember them than to render an ejaculation of gratitude to Providence for the blessing.

We are wasting our time in the most insipid manner, waiting for the treaty. Nothing, of any consequence, will be done till that arrives and is mauled and abused, and then acquiesced in. For the antis must be more numerous than I believe them, and made of sterner stuff than I conceive, if they dare hazard the surrender of the posts and the payment for spoliations, by any resolution of the House

that shall render precarious the execution of the treaty on our part.

I am, as you say, quite a favorite. I am to dine to-day again. I am heir apparent, you know, and a succession is soon to take place. But, whatever may be the wish or the judgment of the present occupant, the French and the demagogues intend, I presume, to set aside the descent. All these hints must be secrets. It is not a subject of conversation as yet. I have a pious and a philosophical resignation to the voice of the people in this case, which is the voice of God. I have no very ardent desire to be the butt of party malevolence. Having tasted of that cup, I find it bitter, nauseous, and unwholesome.

I hope Copeland will find his six loads to complete the meadow, and take the first opportunity to cart or sled the manure from the yard at home up to the top of Stonyfield hill. The first season that happens fit for ploughing, should be employed in cross ploughing the ground at home over the way. The news of my mother's arm growing better has given me great pleasure. Of the four barrels of flour I have shipped to you, present one of them to my mother from me, with my duty and affection. Tell my brother I hope he has seen his error, and become a better friend of peace and good government than he has been somewhat inclined to be since the promulgation of the treaty.

I am, with affections, as ever, your

J. A.

LETTER CCLIII.

Philadelphia, 23 January, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE House of Representatives will do no business, with any spirit, before the treaty arrives. The disaffected are intriguing, but accounts from all quarters are very discouraging to them. We have been very unfortunate in the delays which have attended the despatches of our ambassadors. Very lucky, Mr. John Quincy Adams, that you are not liable to criticism upon this occasion! This demurrage would have been charged doubly, both to your account and that of your father. It would have been a scheme, a trick, a design, a contrivance, from hatred to France, attachment to England, monarchical manœuvres, and aristocratical cunning! Oh! how eloquent they would have been!

The southern gentry are playing, at present, a very artful game, which I may develope to you in confidence hereafter, under the seal of secrecy. Both in conversation and in letters they are representing the Vice President as a man of moderation. Although rather inclined to limited monarchy, and somewhat attached to the English, he is much less so than Jay or Hamilton. For their part, for the sake of conciliation, they should be very willing he should be continued as Vice President, provided the northern gentlemen

would consent that Jefferson should be President. I most humbly thank you for your kind condescension, Messieurs Transchesapeakes.

Witness my hand,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCLIV.

Philadelphia, 26 January, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

YESTERDAY I came to the Senate, as usual on a Monday morning pleasing my imagination and my heart with the hope and expectation of a letter from — my dearest friend. No letter for the Vice President! says Matthew.

All day in bad humor. Dirty weather — wet walking — nothing good — nothing right.

The poor post offices did not escape. It was some blunder — some carelessness of theirs — in Philadelphia, New York, or Boston.

Or perhaps mam is sick — Oh dear! Rheumatisms — Oh dear! Fever and ague! Thus peevishly, fretfully, and unphilosophically, was yesterday passed. Yet, to divert it, I read a number of books in Cowper's Homer and smoked I know not how many cigars.

I have had the agreeable society of Josiah Quincy

and Martin Lincoln to assist in consoling me a little of late.

There is absolutely nothing to write, public or private, but such as the above.

Adieu.

J. A.

LETTER CCLV.

Philadelphia, 8 February, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

It is Monday, the time to expect the eastern mail. Other men have letters, I have none. Humiliated and mortified, and, at the same time, irritated, I feel sometimes a disposition to abuse the post offices, sometimes to make a rash vow never to spend another winter separated from my small family that remains to me, but never once harbor a suspicion that madame may have omitted to write.

Upon the whole, however, my health and spirits have been better this winter than at any time since I had the ague, a blessing which I attribute to the free use of my horse the last summer. Health, and spirits, and leisure, have revived my old passion for reading to such a degree as, diverting me from my usual exercise of walking when I cannot ride, alarms me for the continuance of my health. A gloomy prospect,

moreover, of four months' longer attendance upon Congress, aggravated by the recollection that a few days later than this the last year, on the 19th of February, I got my release and liberty, makes a great defalcation from my philosophical serenity. While we are informed that you have plenty of snow and fine sledding and sleighing, we have weather as mild as April, and streets as dirty as March.

No further news of the treaty, or any thing else, from Europe. Business in Congress as languid, as gaping and yawning as if Morpheus had poured out all his soporifics upon the two houses. The voice of faction, even, is scarcely heard. I suppose, however, when the treaty comes, he will lift up his notes like a trumpet. General Wayne has returned and enjoyed his triumph. Judge Chase is here with the rest. Mr. Lee, the Attorney General, a brother of our friend the late member of the House and the late Governor of Virginia, married to a daughter of Richard Henry Lee, is arrived with his family. So is Mr. McHenry, the Secretary at War. The offices are once more full. But how differently filled than when Jefferson, Hamilton, Jay, &c., were here! The present incumbents not being much thought of, or at least talked of, for President, Vice President, or substitute for both, the public may be less disposed to fight for them or against them. The first situation is the great object of contention, the centre and main source of all emulation, as the learned Dr. Adams teaches in all his writings, and every body believes him, though nobody will own it.

My letters to you must never be seen by any body else. And I ought here to caution you to be very careful and reserved in showing our son's letters, for thousands are watching for his halting, as well as mine and yours. Mrs. Green, with her two daughters, is here, and mourns, in pathetic accents, that her friend, Mrs. Adams, is not here, — and so does

J. A.

LETTER CCLVI.

Philadelphia, 10 February, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Mr. Necker, in his essay on the true principles of executive power in great states, chapter xii., says —

" C'est après avoir été quelques années au centre des affaires publiques, c'est après avoir été, pour ainsi dire, un des axes autour duquel tous les intérêts personnels se mettent en mouvement, que l'on est instruit, par soi-même, de l'activité de ces intérêts, et qu'on apprend en même-tems comment les hommes sont tour-à-tour animés, adoucis et toujours enchainés par l'espérance. Souvent ils pensent à eux au milieu de toutes les négligences qu'ils affectent, et au milieu même des sacrifices, auxquels ils sont conduits par les circonstances. Ils ont, pour les jours de parade, les sentimens les plus magnifiques ; mais, dans leurs habitudes journalières, et dans leur confidences

secretes, on voit qu'ils sont préoccupés, les uns de leur fortune, et les autres des distinctions auxquels ils peuvent prétendre. Ainsi, n'en doutons point, plus on réduit le cercle des encouragemens et des récompenses dont le monarque doit avoir la disposition, et plus on affoiblit entre ses mains l'action du pouvoir exécutif."

A man who, like myself, has been, many more years than Mr. Necker ever was, in the centre of public affairs, and that in a young country which has ever boasted of its simplicity, frugality, integrity, public spirit, public virtue, disinterestedness, &c., can judge from his own experience of the activity of private interest, and perceive in what manner the human heart is influenced, irritated and soothed by hope. Neglects and sacrifices of personal interests are oftener boasted than practised. The parade and pomp, and ostentation, and hypocrisy, have been as common in America as in France. When I hear these pretensions set up, I am very apt to say to myself, this man deceives himself, or is attempting to deceive me.

The various elections of the United States will soon call forth these personal interests in all their vigor, and all the arts of dissimulation to conceal them. I am weary of the game, yet I don't know how I could live out of it. I don't love slight, neglect, contempt, disgrace, nor insult, more than others. Yet I believe I have firmness of mind enough to bear it like a man, a hero, and a philosopher. I might groan like Achilles, and roll from

side to side abed sometimes, at the ignorance, folly, injustice and ingratitude of the world, but I should be resigned, and become more easy and cheerful, and enjoy myself and my friend better than ever I did.

Charles came upon me by surprise last evening, by express from New York, with the Algerine treaty and presents, among which is the sword with a golden scabbard. Colonel John Smith, in a vessel from Lisbon, is arrived at New York with this precious deposit, and Charles came on to bring it. He left all well. I wish the English and Spanish treaties would arrive, that we might have all under one view.

I am

J. A.

LETTER CCLVII.

Philadelphia, 13 February, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE only time to inform you that Monday and Thursday have passed away without bringing me a letter from you. It is the first week that has failed me in the whole, though sometimes the letters have not arrived on the proper day.

There is a Dr. somebody here from Connecticut, who pretends, with an instrument made of some kind of metal or composition of metals, by a sort of mes-

merian rubbing, or stroking, or conjuration, to cure rheumatisms, headaches, pleurisies, and I know not what. Ellsworth will not say that he believes in it, but he states facts and tells stories. I expect the heads of all the old women, (males I mean, you know,) will be turned. They have got him into the President's house among some of his servants, and Mrs. Washington told me a story on Tuesday, before a number of gentlemen, so ineffably ridiculous that I dare not repeat it in writing. The venerable lady laughed as immoderately as all the rest of us did.

A barrier is erected between Europe and America. It seems as if no vessel could get through or over it. I went with Charles last night to the drawing room. As the evening was fair and mild, there was a great circle of ladies and a greater of gentlemen. General Wayne was there in glory.[1] This man's feelings must be worth a guinea a minute. The Pennsylvanians claim him as theirs, and show him a marked respect.

We are now near the middle of February. Last year I left this place on the 19th. Now, I must stay through the long months of March, April, and May. Long? Nothing is long! The time will be soon gone, and we shall be surprised to know what is become of it. How soon will my sands be all run out of the glass! After sixty, the days and hours have additional wings, which they wave and beat with increasing rapidity.

[1] Gained by his victory over the Indians, on the Miamis.

Dr. Priestley is here. I drank tea with him at the President's on Thursday evening. He says he always maintained against Dr. Price, that old age was the pleasantest part of life, and he finds it so. I think so too. One knows not what infirmities may come on, what pains, griefs or sorrows? I am determined to make my small remainder as easy as I can, and enjoy the hours as they pass, but do a little good as I have opportunity.

You have not informed me whether you have let the farms. Duty and love as usual.

J. A.

LETTER CCLVIII.

Philadelphia, 15 February, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

This morning I have your favor of the 3d, which raised my spirits again after the mortification of passing the whole of last week without one.

Benjamin has grown very dull. No abuse — no lies — no terrors, no panics, no rant, in comparison of what he used to have.

The subject[1] which you think will excite all their feelings is well known to every body in public life, but is talked of by nobody but in confidence. I could

[1] The retirement of Washington.

name you, however, as good federalists, and as good men as any, who think and say that he will retire, and that they would if they were he. And who would not? I declare upon my honor I would. After twenty years of such service with such success, and with no obligation to any one, I would retire, before my constitution failed, before my memory failed, before I should grow peevish and fretful, irresolute or improvident. I would no longer put at hazard a character so dearly earned, at present so uncontaminated, but liable by the weakness of age to be impaired in a moment. He has, in the most solemn manner, sworn before many witnesses at various times and on several occasions, and it is now, by all who are in the secret, considered as irrevocable as the laws of Medes and Persians. Your comments to Knox were perfectly delicate and perfectly wise. You need not tremble to think of the subject. In my opinion there is no more danger in the change, than there would be in changing a member of the senate, and whoever lives to see it, will own me to be a prophet. If Jay or even Jefferson (and one or the other it certainly will be) if the succession should be passed over, should be the man, the government will go on as well as ever. Jefferson could not stir a step in any other system than that which is begun. Jay would not wish it. The votes will run for three persons. Two, I have mentioned; the third, being the heir apparent, will not probably be wholly overlooked. If Jefferson and Jay are President and Vice-President, as is not improbable, the other retires without noise, or cries, or

tears to his farm. If either of these two is President and the other[1] Vice-President, he retires without murmur or complaint to his farm forever. If this other should be President and Jefferson or Jay Vice-President, four years more, if life last, of residence in Philadelphia will be his and your portion, after which we shall probably be desirous of imitating the example of the present pair; or if, by reason of strength and fortitude, eight years should be accomplished, that is the utmost limit of time, that I will ever continue in public life at any rate.

Be of good courage therefore, and tremble not. I see nothing to appal me, and I feel no ill forebodings or faint misgivings. I have not the smallest dread of private life nor of public. If private life is to be my portion, my farm and my pen shall employ the rest of my days.

The money of the country, the paper money is the most unpleasant object I see. This must have a remedy, and I fear it will be reserved for me to stem the torrent, a worse one than the western rebellion, or the opposition to the treaty.

This is all in confidence and affection.

J. A.

[1] The third person is here meant, that is, himself. It will be recollected that, at this time, the electors voted, according to the original article of the constitution, without discriminating between the persons voted for as President and Vice President.

LETTER CCLIX.

Philadelphia, 20 February, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Last year I took French leave of Philadelphia to go home. This year I have the mortification to think we are not half way through the session. I see no prospect of getting away before the middle of June.

There is nothing new, foreign or domestic. Electioneering begins to open her campaign. The letter from Jay, in the enclosed pamphlet, is called by the southern gentlemen, an electioneering letter. The toasts in the enclosed paper, are no doubt electioneering toasts. If Washington continues, I suppose Jefferson and Jay may both be set up for Vice President. If he renounces, they will be set up for President and Vice President both, and let the lot come out as it will, the chief contest will be between these two, according to present appearances.

My mind, you know, is made up, and I am much at my ease. I am impatient and distressed while my mind is in suspense. Once decided, I have no longer any uneasiness.

It cannot be long before we shall have news from Europe. My mother's relief from her fears respecting her arm is a great pleasure to me. I hope to see her in good health in June. Have you given her my barrel of flour? You have had a fine season for

your wood. I hope you have hoarded enough to last the year.

Adieu.

J. A.

LETTER CCLX.

Philadelphia, 27 February, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I DINED yesterday with Mr. Madison. Mrs. Madison is a fine woman, and her two sisters are equally so. One of them is married to George Washington, one of the two nephews of the President who were sometimes at our house. Mr. Washington came and civilly inquired after your health. These ladies, whose name was Payne, are of a Quaker family, once of North Carolina.

The treaty with Spain is arrived, and is according to our wishes. The Algerine treaty is horridly costly. It is worse than the British, but will not be so fiercely opposed.

There is no vessel here for Boston. I cannot yet send any seeds.

The great affair is as it was. I hear frequent reflections which indicate that Jefferson, although in good hands, he might do very well; yet, in such hands as will hold him, he would endanger too much. Some persons of high consequence have spoken to

me confidentially, but in general there is great delicacy on that head, and I hold an entire reserve. The question with me is between entire ease and entire disquietude. I will not fly from the latter, nor will I court it. I can live as happily without a carriage as Hamilton.

Two great political questions have been agitated in the Supreme Court, one about Virginia debts paid into the treasury, the other, the constitutionality of the carriage tax. Hamilton argued this last with his usual splendor of talents and eloquence, as they say. In the course of his argument he said no man was obliged to pay the tax. This he knew by experiment; for after having enjoyed the pleasure of riding in his carriage for six years, he had been obliged to lay it down again and was happy.

There is no hope of getting away till June. The House never went so slowly on.

I am

J. A.

LETTER CCLXI.

Philadelphia, 1 March, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

YESTERDAY the President sent his carriage for me to go with the family to the theatre. The Rage and the Spoiled Child were the two pieces. It rained

and the house was not full. I thought I perceived a little mortification. Mr. George Washington and his fair lady were with us.

Yours of the 21st gives me a satisfactory account of farming. I think I would engage Billings if I could. I must leave it to you to give him what you think fit. There is no vessel up for Boston, and seeds are very scarce and uncommonly dear.

As to the subject of yours of the 20th, I am quite at my ease. I never felt less anxiety when any considerable change lay before me. Aut transit aut finit. I transmigrate or come to an end. The question is between living at Philadelphia or at Quincy ; between great cares and small cares. I have looked into myself and see no meanness nor dishonesty there. I see weakness enough, but no timidity. I have no concern on your account but for your health. A woman *can* be silent, when she will.

After all, persuasion may overcome the inclination of the chief to retire. But, if it should, it will shorten his days, I am convinced. His heart is set upon it, and the turpitude of the Jacobins touches him more nearly than he owns in words. All the studied efforts of the federalists to counterbalance abuse by compliment don 't answer the end.

I suspect, but don 't know, that Patrick Henry, Mr. Jefferson, Mr. Jay, and Mr. Hamilton, will all be voted for. I ask no questions; but questions are forced upon me. I have had some conversations purposely sought, in order, as I believe, indeed as I know, to convince me that the federalists had no thoughts of

overleaping the succession. The only question that labors in my mind is, whether I shall retire with my file-leader? I hate to live in Philadelphia in summer, and I hate still more to relinquish my farm. I hate speeches, messages, addresses and answers, proclamations, and such affected, studied, constrained things. I hate levees and drawing rooms. I hate to speak to a thousand people to whom I have nothing to say. Yet all this I can do. But I am too old to continue more than one, or at most more than two heats, and that is scarcely time enough to form, conduct and complete any very useful system.

Electioneering enough we shall have. The enclosed scraps will shew specimens.

LETTER CCLXII.

Philadelphia, 12 March, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I DINED yesterday with Mr. Burr, who lives here in style. A number of members of the House, the Speaker Mr. Dayton, among the rest. It seems to be the general opinion that the House will express some opinions unfavorable to the treaty; but finally carry it into effect. There is a good deal of apprehension expressed for the Union in conversation. Some think and say it cannot last. Such is the repugnance between the east and the west.

The death of my aunt H., for by that name it is most natural for me to call her, is an event that was every day to be expected, and as her days of usefulness and satisfaction were past, can be no cause of rational grief to her nearest relations. It has not, however, failed to revive the remembrance of the scenes of my youth, of my father, my uncles, my aunts, and my cousins, many of whom were gone before her, and to affect me with many tender sentiments and serious reflections. Alas! she was little more than thirty years older than myself. I shall never see her years. But why should I regret such a prospect as that? Although I am convinced that human life is a happy and agreeable scene, a charming, delightful state, upon the whole, and although my share of it has been chequered with perplexities, difficulties, dangers and distresses, which fall to the lot of but few, yet it has been sweet and happy on the whole, and calls for gratitude to my Maker and Preserver. Yet every year, according to my opinions and persuasions and expectations, brings me nearer to a state of superior excellence and more unmixed enjoyment, where I hope to meet all my relations and other friends who may have done their duty in this. There, my dearest friend, may we meet, and never be again separated by any necessities to go to Europe, or Philadelphia, or elsewhere.

My duty to my mother, and congratulate her on the recovery of her arm. I hope to see her again in June. But the House of Representatives will keep me here as long as possible.

Your amanuensis improves in her hand-writing. She superscribes your letters elegantly. My love to her. I am not sorry that John went to England. He will have opportunities of improvement and gaining information there.

I am

J. A.

LETTER CCLXIII.

Philadelphia, 13 March, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I COVET the harp of Amphion. What would I not give for the harp of Amphion?

In my walks in the cedar grove, in rocky run, and on Penn's hill, I should play upon my lyre, and the merry rocks would dance after me and reel into walls. This would be to me a very pleasant and profitable private amusement. But there is another use I could make of my instrument in my public employment, more grateful to a benevolent heart because more useful to mankind. In no age of the world was it more wanted.

"Amphion thus bade wild dissension cease,
And softened mortals learned the arts of peace.
Amphion taught contending kings
From various discords to create
The music of a well tuned state;

Nor slack nor strain the tender strings
Those useful touches to impart
That strike the subject's answering heart,
And the soft, silent harmony that springs
From sacred union and consent of things."

Alas! I am not an Amphion. I have been thirty years singing and whistling among my rocks, and not one would ever move without money. I have been twenty years saying if not singing, preaching if not playing—

" From various discords to create
The music of a well tuned state;
And the soft, silent harmony that springs
From sacred union and consent of things,"

but an uncomplying world will not regard my uncouth discourses. I cannot sing nor play. If I had eloquence, or humor, or irony, or satire, or the harp or lyre of Amphion, how much good could I do to the world! What a mortification to my vanity! What a humiliation to my self-love!

The rocks in the House of Representatives will not dance to my lyre. They will not accord to a " well tuned state." They will not endure " the harmony that springs from sacred union and consent of things." They are for breaking all the instruments but that of the thorough bass, and then blowing you deaf and dumb. There are bold and daring strides making to demolish the President, Senate, and all but the House, which, as it seems to me, must be the effect of the measures that many are urging. Be not alarmed,

however, they will not carry their point. The treaty will be executed, and that by the consent of the House.

I am going to hear Dr. Priestley. His discourses are learned, ingenious, and useful. They will be printed, and, he says, dedicated to me. Don't tell this secret though, for no other being knows it. It will get me the character of a heretic, I fear. I presume, however, that dedicating a book to a man will not imply that he approves every thing in it.

The weather is so fine that I long to be upon my hills. Pray, since my harp cannot build walls, how do my friends go on who are obliged to employ their elbows in that laborious work?

I sometimes think that if I were in the House of Representatives, and could make speeches there, I could throw some light upon these things. If Mr. Jefferson should be President, I believe I must put up as a candidate for the House. But this is my vanity. I feel sometimes as if I could speechify among them, but, alas, alas! I am too old. It would soon destroy my health. I declare, however, if I were in that House, I would drive out of it some demons that haunt it. There are false doctrines and false jealousies predominant there at times that it would be easy to exorcise.

You see I mind no order in what I write to you. I know your criticism will not be cruel to

J. A.

LETTER CCLXIV.

Philadelphia, 19 March, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We have a turn of weather as cold as any we have had through the whole winter. The violence of the north-west wind, which has thrown down chimneys and blown off roofs in this city, we suppose, has prevented the eastern mail from crossing the North River and deprived me of my Thursday's letter as yet. I hope it will come to-day.

A thousand and one speeches have been made in the House of Representatives upon the motion for petitioning the President for papers. Twenty complete demonstrations have been made of the constitutionality of it, and twenty more of its unconstitutionality. Ten of its expediency, and as many of its inexpediency. Five of its utility, and the same number of its inutility. After all, they will ask and receive, and then lash and maul awhile, and then do the needful. I dined on the 17th with the friendly sons of St. Patrick, and to-day I dine with Rush. Judge Cushing departs this morning, and Mrs. Cushing will call upon you. Ellsworth embarks in a day or two for South Carolina and Georgia.

We have a party business from Kentucky ; a strange complaint against Mr. Marshall, which obliges us to sit to-day, Saturday. I regret this, because it is too

exhausting to me to sit so constantly. My task is pretty severe, especially in cold weather. This wind will delay intelligence from Europe for ten days or a fortnight. Liancourt is going with Ellsworth, and Talleyrand talks of embarking for Hamburg. Having no horse, and reading more and walking less than usual, I am solicitous about my health. The birds, in numbers and variety, began to sing, and the grass to grow green, before this last gripe of Queen Mab. The poor birds have hard times now.

I cannot see a ray of hope before June. If the House should be frenzical, we must sit till next March, and leave it to the people to decide by choosing a new President, Senate and House, who will harmoniously go all lengths, call George a tyrant to his face, the English nation pirates, break the treaty, enter into an alliance offensive with France, and go to war with spirit, consistency and dignity. But I believe the House will adopt the language which says that the just keep their promises though they have made them to their hurt, and that they must make the best of a bad bargain, and come off thus, as well as they can, by abusing Jay, President, and Senate, and treaty, without pretending to annul it.

Hi! ho! Oh dear! I am, most tenderly,

J. A.

LETTER CCLXV.

Philadelphia, 25 March, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

On Wednesday I dined with Mr. Russell, the friend of Dr. Priestley, and while we were at table, in came large packets of letters and newspapers from England. The ladies at table had letters from their friends, and the scene was so lively, so much like what I had often felt, that it put me into very good humor. The news was what you will see in Fenno's paper.

Yesterday I dined at the President's, with ministers of state and their ladies, foreign and domestic. After dinner the gentlemen drew off after the ladies, and left me alone with the President in close conversation. He detained me there till nine o'clock, and was never more frank and open upon politics. I find his opinions and sentiments are more exactly like mine than I ever knew before, respecting England, France, and our American parties. He gave me intimations enough that his reign would be very short. He repeated it three times at least, that this and that was of no consequence to him personally, as he had but a very little while to stay in his present situation. This must be a confidential secret. I have hinted it to no one here. The President told me he had that day received three or four letters from his new min-

ister in London, one of them as late as the 29th of December. Mr. Pickering informs me that Mr. Adams modestly declined a presentation at court, but it was insisted on by Lord Grenville; and, accordingly, he was presented to the King, and I think, the Queen, and made his harangues and received his answers. By the papers I find that Mr. Pinckney appeared at court on the 28th of January, after which, I presume, Mr. Adams had nothing to do but return to Holland. The appearances of peace are as yet but faint.

The House of Representatives have applied for papers, and the President has their request under consideration. He is not at all pleased with this. A motion is now before the House, made by Mr. Harper, that it be resolved that provision be made to carry into execution all the treaties yet published. How long this will be debated I know not. There is danger that the delay on our part will occasion delays on the part of Britain, but I hope not. Three of our representatives, Lyman, Dearborn, and Varnum, voted against all New England, except one, I believe, in Vermont. The loss of Mr. Ames and Mr. Dexter, has been much lamented. Varnum, and Lyman, and Dearborn, are as inveterate as Giles, by all that I hear.

I have not yet seen my son's public letters. There is such rancor of party that the prospect of a change in administration quite cures me of all desire to have a share in it. Repose and poverty, I say. Yet I am not intimidated. Renegadoes and adventurers from foreign countries acquire such an influence among

the people, although there is no attachment in their nature to us or our country, and there is every reason to suspect the worst influence over them ; and sensible people are so fearful of provoking their wrath and impudence by exposing them, that it is really disgusting to enter on any public stage. The people are so abused and deceived, and there is so little care or pains taken to undeceive and disabuse them, that the consequences must be very disagreeable. I am, with undiminished attachment,

Your affectionate

J. A.

LETTER CCLXVI.

Philadelphia, 9 April, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE House of Representatives have not yet determined. The question is to be called up on Monday. But the opposition, who now call themselves the virtuous majority, will endeavor still to postpone it. It is now avowed by Mr. Bond, the British chargé d'affaires, that the surrender of the posts is suspended upon the determination of the House of Representatives. And who could expect it would be otherwise ?

I have read " the minister's" despatches from London. The King could not help discovering his old ill humor. The mad idiot will never recover. Blun-

derer by nature, accidents are all against him. Every measure of his reign has been wrong. It seems they don' t like Pinckney. They think he is no friend to that country, and too much of a French Jacobin. They wanted to work up some idea or other of introducing another in his place, but our young politician saw into them too deeply to be duped. At his last visit to court, the king passed him without speaking to him, which you know will be remarked by courtiers of all nations. I am glad of it; for I would not have my son go so far as Mr. Jay, and affirm the friendly disposition of that country to this. I know better. I know their jealousy, envy, hatred, and revenge, covered under pretended contempt.

I am so fatigued and disgusted with the insipidity of this dull life, that I am half of a mind to vow that if Washington don't resign, I will. The old hero looks very grave of late. However, there is a high probability that I am upon my last year of public life, for if there should not be a choice by the people, I will not suffer a vote to be given for me in the House of Representatives. I will never serve in that high and responsible situation without some foundation of people to stand on. If I should be chosen Vice President only by a plurality, I will refuse. In short, there are so many probable cases in which I am determined to retire that the probability of it is, upon the whole, very strong. Indeed, I feel myself to be a fool to serve here at all.

I am glad that you cast off the fret upon your mind. You received some post notes soon after the date of

yours of 28th of March, which enabled you to face your creditors and gave you more courage, I hope.

I am

J. A.

LETTER CCLXVII.

Philadelphia, 13 April, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I DINED on Monday at the President's with young La Fayette and his preceptor, tutor or friend, whatever they call him, whose name is Frestel. I asked them with Mr. Lear to breakfast with me this morning and they agreed to come; but last evening, Mr. Lear came with a message from the President to ask my opinion whether it would be advisable for the young gentleman, in the present circumstances of his father and mother and whole family, and considering his own tender years, to accept invitations and mingle in society? Whether it would not too much interrupt his studies? The youth and his friend had proposed these questions to the President and asked his advice, and expressed their own opinion, that retirement would be more advisable and more desirable. I agreed in opinion with the President and his guests, and as I had been the first who had invited them, at the President's request agreed to excuse them from accepting my invitation, that they might have it to say as a

general apology that they had accepted none. There is a resemblance of father and mother in the young man. He is said to be studious and discreet. I hope he will live to become as respectable, and a more fortunate man than his father.[1] You must have known him at five or six years of age, as well as his sister Anastasia, who is now with her parents.

The majority of the House of Representatives appear to be resolute to do nothing. In fact they have done nothing, and Mr. Giles boasts that he has a majority of ten determined to do nothing concerning the treaty with England. For my own part, I see nothing better than a crisis working up, which is to determine whether the constitution is to be brought to its end this year, or last a few longer. Not the tavern at Cowes, not the tavern at Harwich or at Helvoet, not the taverns at Nantes, L'Orient, and Brest, nor the calms, storms and contrary winds of a long voyage at sea, nothing but a journey through Spain, from Ferrol to Fontarabia is more tedious than the operations of our government under this constitution.

I have received your's of April 1. You must get labor as reasonably as you can. But I almost wish we had let our homestead upon shares as well as the others. Another year I will, if I don't stay at home to take care of it.

I am, affectionately,

J. A.

[1] Who was at this time in captivity at Olmutz.

LETTER CCLXVIII.

Philadelphia, 16 April, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE Doctor may have the steers if he wishes to have them.

The people of the United States are about to be stirred up in every quarter of the union. The House of Representatives are determined to go all lengths. The merchants of this city have had the most numerous meeting that has been known for a long time, and unanimously voted to petition, that the faith, the honor, and the interest of the nation may be preserved. They have appointed committees to correspond with the merchants in all the seaports. I expect that the citizens will also be called together in the state house yard and it is said that the gentlemen will turn out, but the event will be doubtful. The state parties will all be agitated, and party spirit will be carried to the highest pitch. It must be a national determination, and if the nation solemnly determines upon war and confusion, they ought not to charge it to the government. These critical situations are familiar to me, and I always feel calmest in the midst of them. A few outlandish men in the House have taken the lead, and Madison, Giles and Baldwin are humble followers. If the voice of the nation should be finally and decidedly in favor of the treaty, there will be a

mortified party, so bitter, rancorous and desperate, fomented by foreign influence, in opposition, that the government will be very much embarrassed, and the public service very uncomfortable.

When I take a walk out of town and see the young clover beautifully starting, I long to see my own. Pray how fares it?

I have always thought it injudicious to make any attempt against the governor, knowing as I do, the habitual attachment to him, as well as the difficulty of uniting people in another. The countenance he gives to a very profligate party, is very pernicious to the public, but he is stimulated to it in part by the opposition to him, and he would not do less out of office. The constitution of our government is calculated to create, excite and support perpetual parties in the States, mixing and crossing alternately with parties in the federal government. It will be a perpetual confusion of parties. I fear we do not deserve all the blessings we have within our reach, and that our country must be deformed with divisions, contests, dissensions and civil wars as well as others.

As the people of Rome scrambled for power against the senate; as the people of Athens scrambled for more power than was reserved for them by the laws of Solon; as the people of Carthage scrambled for power against their senate; as the people of England scrambled for power against the king and lords, and set up Oliver; as the people of France scrambled for power against every majority and set up Robespierre; so the House of Representatives of

the United States will scramble for power against the President and Senate. And the frequency of popular elections will corrupt all before them. May God of his infinite mercy grant that some remedy may be found before it be too late, in the good sense of this people.

Mr. C. desires me "to present his most profound respects, not daring to send by a husband, any more affectionate regards."

I will venture to present you with my most affectionate regards, my earnest wishes and longing desires to see you.

J. A.

LETTER CCLXIX.

Philadelphia, 19 April, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE sensations of 19th April, 1775, and those of this morning, have some resemblance to each other. A prospect of foreign war and civil war in conjunction, is not very pleasant. We are a poor, divided nation, in the midst of all our prosperity. The House of Representatives, after debating three weeks about asking for papers, are now beginning another discussion, which may last as long, on the merits and demerits of the treaty. If the House refuse to make the appropriations, it is difficult to see how we can

avoid war, and it is not easier to find out how we can preserve this government from dissolution. We must, however, coolly and patiently study and search for the means and resources which may be left to avoid war and support government. Mr. Swift and Mr. Goodhue have spoken ably in favor of the treaty, and Mr. Nicholas and Mr. Giles spoke more moderately against it than was expected.

I had no letter from you yesterday. Briesler says the mail goes now three times a week, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. I shall endeavor to write by each, though it may be but a line of remembrance. I hope your indisposition was not a grave one; but the omission of a letter yesterday gave me some fears.

I cannot deny the right of the House to ask for papers, nor to express their opinions upon the merits of a treaty. My ideas are very high of the rights and powers of the House of Representatives. These powers may be abused, and in this instance there is great danger that they will be. Such a combination of party motives as debts, anti-federalism and French influence, seldom occurs to overawe the members and lead them into party violence. But the faith and honor of the nation are pledged, and though the House cannot approve, they ought to feel themselves bound. Some persons still think the House will comply. But there is an inveteracy and obstinacy on this occasion such as I scarcely ever saw. The pride of Madison, Giles, Baldwin, ill brooking the superior powers of the Senate, emulating the dignity and lustre of members

of that body, ardently struggling to rival an Ellsworth, a King, &c. These are feelings that our law-givers, in framing our constitution, did not advert to. The elections of the two Houses by such different bodies as the people and their legislators, will always leave this difficulty in full force. The leading members of the House, such as Madison and Baldwin, should have been ere now senators.

But I must not speculate. I must come to something more pleasing, assurances of the perpetual affection of

J. A.

LETTER CCLXX.

[Philadelphia,] 24 April, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE received in your favor of the 15th an entertaining account of Vortigern and Rowena.[1]

Our wagon is mired to the axletree in a bog, and unable to advance or retreat. The people only can draw it out; but whether it will be backwards or forwards I know not. The horses upon Portland hill employed to draw up hill, are so equally matched with the load and those behind, that the wheels can roll neither up nor down. Pegged like Ariel in a

[1] Ireland's imposture.

rifted oak, we can only sprawl in the air with our arms and legs, and fill the atmosphere with our cries and clamors.

I forgot to mention the young men's land. I must have it. I always understood there were but eleven acres. The price is exorbitant. But pray the doctor to make the best bargain he can, and finish the business. I mean the land of the young Haydens.

The charming letter from our son I return. I know very well all his meaning. He will see mankind in his youth.

I am, with attachments and wishes and affections unutterable,

J. A.

Yours of the 18th reached me in four days, i. e., on the 22d. I know your difficulties. I mean to do very little at farming. I will let out on shares all I have next year. I see no prospect of leaving this city before the fifth or sixth of June. Obstinacy must be resisted with rational firmness and steadiness.

LETTER CCLXXI.

Philadelphia, 30 April, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I AM not surprised at your anxiety expressed in your letter of the 25th, which I received yesterday. The

conduct of certain mules has been so gloomy and obstinate for five months past, as to threaten the most dangerous effects. The proceedings of Boston, New York, and Philadelphia now, compared with their intemperate folly last July or August, is a curious specimen of negotiations with foreign courts and nations by the people at large in town meetings. Those cities have disgraced themselves and their leaders.

The House yesterday, in committee, voted to make the appropriations, but in the House they will disgrace themselves again by party manœuvres to-day, and by factious preambles or preparatory resolutions. Our V——, who is as cross a goat as any from Virginia, not excepting Rutherford, was out of the way. Another member, Patten from Delaware, was absent. Both will vote to-day against the resolution; so that the business is still in suspense, and the anxiety and vigilance of the people ought not to relax. Mr. Ames, the day before yesterday, in his feeble state, scarcely able to stand upon his legs, and with much difficulty finding breath to utter his periods, made one of the best speeches he ever produced, to the most crowded audience ever assembled. He was attended to with a silence and interest never before known, and he made an impression that terrified the hardiest and will never be forgotten. Judge Iredell and I happened to sit together. Our feelings beat in unison. "My God! how great he is," says Iredell, "how great he has been!" "He has been noble," said I. After some time Iredell breaks out, "Bless my stars, I never heard any thing so great since I

was born!" "It is divine," said I; and thus we went on with our interjections, not to say tears, till the end. Tears enough were shed. Not a dry eye, I believe, in the House, except some of the jackasses who had occasioned the necessity of the oratory. These attempted to laugh, but their visages "grinned horribly ghastly smiles." They smiled like Foulon's son-in-law when they made him kiss his father's dead and bleeding head. Perhaps the speech may not read as well. The situation of the man excited compassion, and interested all hearts in his favor. The ladies wished his soul had a better body.

We are told Harri. Otis excelled at Boston, and displayed great oratorical talents. I cannot give encouragement, nor entertain any hope, of getting away before the fifth of June, unless the hard hearts should be softened. The heart of Pharaoh was judicially hardened and so are those of ——. Massachusetts has three of the worst.

I am, most tenderly,

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXII.

Philadelphia, 3 May, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE result of Saturday's debate in the House of Representatives removes all anxiety for the remainder

of this session, and leaves me at liberty to ask leave to go home. The state of my own health, which requires relaxation, and the sickness in my family and neighborhood, would have well justified me if I had retired even before the great question was decided. I shall ask leave this day, unless something unforeseen should happen to prevent me. If I should obtain leave of absence after Thursday next, I shall be at New York on Sunday. Whether I shall go by water or land from thence, will depend upon circumstances. Some time in the course of the week after next, I hope to see you, but there are so many circumstances of wind and weather, as well as other things, which may intervene, that I cannot make any disposition by which I can calculate to a day or a week when I shall get home.

It is a mortifying consideration that five months have been wasted upon a question whether national faith is binding on a nation. Nothing but the ignorance and inexperience of this people can excuse them. Really, we have not a right sense of moral or national obligation. We have no national pride, no national sense of honor. I suppose the decision of the House has determined the President's resignation and retirement. And the question who shall succeed him may occasion as much controversy and animosity as the treaty with Great Britain, which was ultimately determined by no proper considerations of merit, but merely by fear of constituents in many.

If my plan should be altered in any respect, I shall write you an account of it. I must spend a little

time with the children at New York. I have been five months without once mounting a horse and without one long walk, so that, although I have walked every day more or less, I am under some fears of the effect upon my health of a journey of a hundred miles a day in a stage.

The enclosed letters please to file away carefully with the others.

With the tenderest affection, I am

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXIII.

Lovejoy's, in Stratford, (Connecticut,)
27 November, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We lodged at Monroe's, in Marlborough, on Wednesday night; at Hitchcock's, in Brookfield, Thursday night; at David Bull's, in Hartford, Friday night, and at Lovejoy's, in Stratford, last night. I have been to hear sound orthodox Calvinism from Mr. Stebbins, this morning.

At Hartford I saw Mr. Adet's[1] note, in folio, to our Secretary of State, and I find it an instrument well calculated to reconcile me to private life. It will purify me from all envy of Mr. Jefferson, or Mr. Pinckney, or

[1] See the Writings of Washington, vol. xi., p. 179.

Mr. Burr, or Mr. any body who may be chosen President or Vice President. Although, however, I think the moment a dangerous one, I am not scared. Fear takes no hold of me and makes no approaches to me that I perceive, and if my country makes just claims upon me, I will be as I ever have been, prompt to share fates and fortunes with her. I dread not a war with France or England, if either forces it upon us, but will make no aggression upon either with my free will, without just and necessary cause and provocation. In all events of peace or war, I think prices must fall considerably before spring, lands, labor, provisions and all.

We have had so cold a journey that I fear our stone wall stands still. If it does, however, I suppose manure, or ploughing, or cutting and carting wood, will furnish employment enough.

Nothing mortifies me more than to think how the English will be gratified at this French flight. John Bull will exult and shrug his shoulders like a Frenchman, and I fear, show us some cunning, insidious kind of kindness upon the occasion. I should dread his kindness as much as French severity, but will be the dupe of neither. If I have looked with any accuracy into the hearts of my fellow citizens, the French will find, as the English have found, that feelings may be stirred which they never expected to find there, and that, perhaps, the American people themselves are not sensible are within them.

I shall write you from New York. This cold weather makes me regret the loss of my bed and

fireside, and especially the companion and delight of both.

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCLXXIV.

Philadelphia, 4 December, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I CAME to this city on Friday night, after a cold ride of eighty miles from Elizabethtown. There are great complaints of want of water, for grinding, for cattle and for families, through the whole country.

Yesterday I dined with the President, in company with John Watts, the king of the Cherokees, with a large number of his chiefs and their wives; among the rest the widow and children of Hanging Maw, a famous friend of our's who was basely murdered by some white people. The President dined four sets of Indians on four several days the last week.

The French manœuvres have gained the votes of Pennsylvania, and how many others is unknown. The election will be a meagre one and I shall not envy it. I showed the letters of Mr. J. Q. A. to the President, who told me that things appeared to him exactly as they did to his minister. To-day he has sent me a letter to him from Mr. T. Paine, dated at Paris, 20 of September, 1795, which he said was the most insulting letter he ever received. Paine accuses the President

of connivance at his imprisonment in France, thinks he ought to have interposed in his behalf and reclaimed him.

"I ought not to have suspected you of treachery, but I must continue to think you treacherous, till you give me cause to think otherwise. I am sure you would have found yourself more at your ease if you had acted by me as you ought, for whether your desertion of me was intended to gratify the English government, or to let me fall into destruction in France that you might exclaim the louder against the French revolution, or whether you hoped by my extinction to meet with less opposition in mounting up the American government, either of these will involve you in reproach, you will not easily shake off." These are his words.

Mr. Paine's long threatened pamphlet against the President, it is supposed, is arrived, and Mr. Bache is to publish it in the form of a letter to George Washington. It is even said that a patent is to be obtained for the exclusive privilege of publishing it.

Whether the French Directory have only been drawn in to favor the election of a favorite, or whether in their trances and delirium of victory they think to terrify America, or whether in their sallies they may not venture on hostilities, time will discover. Americans must be cool and steady if they can. Some of our people may be cured of their extravagant love and shaken in their unlimited confidence. The French character, whether under monarchical or republican government, is not the most equitable nor

the least assuming of all nations. The fire, impetuosity and vehemence of their temperament is apt to be violent, immoderate and extravagant. The passions are always outrageous. A Frenchman in love must shoot himself or succeed. A Frenchman in anger must shed the blood of his object, and so of the rest.

I hope we shall make two houses to-morrow. My duty to my mother and love to all.

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXV.

Philadelphia, 8 December, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

ENCLOSED are some signal accomplishments of prophecies. Be cool and discreet in your communications of them. No such person as Jasper Dwight is known to either of the senators of Vermont. The signature is thought to be fictitious. I have no letter from you later than the Sunday after my departure. Major Butler has indeed resigned.

They kept back Paine's letter several weeks, presuming no doubt that it would not promote their election. It appeared for the first time, this morning. I think, of all Paine's productions it is the weakest, and at the same time, the most malicious. The man appears to me to be mad, not drunk. He has the

vanity of the lunatic who believed himself to be Jupiter, the father of gods and men. There is a Dr. E. here, a relation of Mr. Burr and Pierpont Edwards, who has lately returned from Paris. Perhaps he may be the Pennsylvanian of whom you read.

I can say nothing of election.[1] I have received to-day the votes of New Jersey, but know not for whom they are, as they are under seal.

I am

J. A.

The feelings of friendship excite a curiosity to know how McKean will vote. By that I shall guess how Governor Adams would have voted. But I have seen friendships of S. Quincy, Jonathan Sewall, Daniel Leonard, General Brattle, Treasurer Gray and fifty others go away like a vapor before political winds; and a constant succession of others go the same way from that time to this, that I cannot depend upon any judgment I can form from any feelings of my own. No private friendships would induce me to spare a wrong political character. But McKean and Adams can never believe the lies that are told. If they could vote against me, it must be because they think I should not be supple enough to the French. I have known the time when both of them would have been as stiff as myself.

I feel myself in a very happy temper of mind;

[1] The third election by the electors of President and Vice-President. Mr. Adams was chosen.

perfectly willing to be released from the post of danger, but determined, if called to it, to brave it, if its horrors were ten times thicker than they are. I have but few years of life left, and they cannot be better bestowed than upon that independence of my country, in defence of which, that life has ever been in jeopardy.

LETTER CCLXXVI.

Philadelphia, 30 December, 1796.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE prospect that opens upon me presents troubles enough of every kind. I have made some inquiry concerning horses and carriages and find that a common chariot of the plainest sort cannot be had under twelve hundred dollars, and if you go to a little more ornament and elegance, you must give fifteen hundred. The President has a pair of horses to sell, one, nine, the other, ten years old, for which he asks a thousand dollars, and there is no probability of procuring a decent span for less than six hundred dollars. House rent, another indispensable article, will be extravagantly high. The plenty of paper has unsettled every thing. Nothing has a price. Every one asks and every one cheats as much as he can, I

think. I wish I knew what would be asked for a chariot in Boston.

The President says he must sell something to enable him to clear out. When a man is about retiring from public life, and sees nothing but a ploughshare between him and the grave, he naturally thinks most upon that. When Charles the fifth resigned his empire and crown, he went to building his coffin. When I contemplated a retirement, I meditated the purchase of Mrs. Vesey's farm, and thought of building a tomb on my own ground adjoining to the burying yard. The President is now engaged in his speculations upon a vault which he intends to build for himself, not to sleep but to lie down in. So you see, my little head is made like two great heads, and I have ambitiously placed myself between them. Mrs. Blodget, who, I dare say, is more desirous that you should be Presidente than that I should be President, says she is afraid President Washington will not live long. I should be afraid too, if I had not confidence in his farm and his horse. He must be a fool, I think, who dies of chagrin when he has a fine farm and a Narraganset mare that paces, trots and canters. But I don 't know but all men are such fools. I think a man had better wear than rust.

The boyish language of the emissaries from Monroe's academy is not confined to Boston market. Captain B—— is holding the same cant. John Adams must be an intrepid to encounter the open assaults of France and the secret plots of England in concert

with all his treacherous friends and open enemies in his own country. Yet I assure you he never felt more serene in his life.

Yours most tenderly,

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXVII.

Philadelphia, 5 January, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I DINED yesterday with Dr. Rush, who desired me to send the enclosed oration upon a weak democrat whom he is pleased to call a great philosopher, astronomer and republican. We must put up with the vagaries of our flighty friend. Mr. and Mrs. Liston, the Britons, dined there, the first time I had met the lady. They are Scotch, genteel people. Mr. and Mrs. Regal dined there too. Mr. Regal brought a letter, you remember, from Mr. Adams. A man of sixty, perhaps, married to a handsome girl of thirty. A man of learning, but I presume enthusiastical. He talks much of the philosophy of Mr. Kant or Kent, or some such name, a German of great fame. He speaks of him sometimes very extravagantly. I heard him say that he thought Kant would make a third from Socrates and Jesus Christ.

Mankind seem to me to have lost their senses.

I yesterday received yours of the 25th of Decem-

ber. The cold has been as constant and severe as with you. I hope you will get wood enough, yet it is uncertain how much will be necessary. Stones cannot be sledded in too great numbers. They will not be stolen. Have you seen the second "Guillotina" from Connecticut, in its usual strain of wicked satire?

Neither Virginia nor any other State, except the wise Pennsylvania and the wise Georgia, Tennessee, and Kentucky, ever intended B. should be Vice. I have received one set of votes from each State, and the highest number is seventy-one, according to the accounts. The votes are all sealed up.

I say, too, "If thou, O Lord! go not up with us, carry us not up thither."

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXVIII.

Philadelphia, 11 January, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

On Tuesday, when I waited, as usual, on Mrs. Washington, after attending the levee, she congratulated me very complaisantly and affectionately on my election, and went farther and said more than I expected. She said it gave them great pleasure to find that the votes had turned in my favor, &c. I doubted whether their prudence would have ventured so far. I believe it sincere. Kidd, however, the steward, was

very active and busy for Jefferson. This was from jealousy of Briesler, no doubt. He expected that Jefferson would have taken him, I suppose, and his principle was as good as McKean's. Gerry is steady, while so many prove as slippery as eels.

Dined yesterday with Major Jackson, in company with General Lincoln who lodges there. Married to Miss Willing who is an agreeable woman, and comfortably provided for by an office, he lives in a neat and elegant taste, but I believe prudently. Mr. Ames and a few more made a very social set, and we enjoyed ourselves without alloy.

The most unpleasant part of the prospect before me is that of remaining here until June or July. I can 't see my grass and barley grow, nor my wall rise. I have, however, almost forgotten my farm. It appears very differently to me. It seems as if I ought not to think about it. The river is frozen so that nothing can get out. Besides, flour is dearer here than at Boston by one third. It has rained to-day like a flood, but the weather must be very warm, and continue so many days before the river can open. There is no probability of it for some time. If it opens in season, I shall send some grass seeds. I will not suffer the bushes I have cut down to grow again ; but I shall not attend much to my farm. My whole time and thoughts must be devoted to the public.

I think of you and dream of you and long to be with you. But I suppose this must not be yet. My duty and love to all.

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXIX.

Philadelphia, 14 January, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

You say Mr. H. is very full of his praises of Mr. Monroe. So is Dr. Edwards. He says Mr. Monroe's correspondence will do him infinite honor when it comes to be published, and all that. Monroe's house has been a school for scandal against his country, its government and governors, Mr. Jay and his treaty, &c. Edwards says, as Dr. Rush told me, that Washington's character was in total contempt in France. This I shall not believe till I have better evidence than that of any or all these great personages; nay, than all the Directory, Ancients and five hundred.

Mr. Madison is to retire. It seems the mode of becoming great is to retire. Madison, I suppose, after a retirement of a few years, is to be President or Vice President. Mr. Cabot, I suppose, after aggrandizing his character in the shade a few years, is to be some great thing too; and Mr. Ames, &c., &c., &c. It is marvellous how political plants grow in the shade. Continual daylight and sunshine show our faults and record them. Our persons, voices, clothes, gait, air, sentiments, &c., all become familiar to every eye and ear and understanding, and they diminish in proportion, upon the same principle that no man is a hero

to his wife or valet de chambre. These gentlemen are in the right to run away and hide. Tell Mr. Cabot so if you see him. His countrymen will soon believe him to be a giant in a cave, and will go in a body and dig him out. I wish, but don't tell Cabot so, that they would dig up Gerry.

I have bespoken a chariot, and am treating for horses. We read of a vessel from Rotterdam arrived at Lisbon, or its neighborhood, by which I hope there may be letters from our young friends, as late as the middle of November. My anxiety for letters from them increases every day. They have more accurate views and intelligence than any others, and, what is of more importance still, more application and industry.

The weather has moderated a little. I am, with anxious desires to see you, which I fear cannot be gratified before July,

Yours forever,

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXX.

Philadelphia, 26 January, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE only time to enclose you something. Dr. Priestley breakfasted with me. I asked him whether it was his opinion that the French would ultimately

establish a republican government. He said it was, and his opinion was founded upon the prophecy. France appeared to him to be one of the horns that were to fall off. He acknowledged, however, the uncertainty, and related a paragraph from a French writer who travelled in England immediately before the restoration of Charles the second. "That the people were much engaged in disputing about a form of government, but that all agreed there would never be any kings in England again."

When statesmen found their judgments upon prophecies I can never confide in their opinions.

LETTER CCLXXXI.

Philadelphia, 4 February, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HOPE you will not communicate to any body the hints I give you about our prospects; but they appear every day worse and worse. House rent at twenty-seven hundred dollars a year, fifteen hundred dollars for a carriage, one thousand for one pair of horses, all the glasses, ornaments, kitchen furniture, the best chairs, settees, plateaus, &c., all to purchase, all the china, delph or wedgewood, glass and crockery of every sort to purchase, and not a farthing probably will the House of Representatives allow, though the Senate have voted a small addition. All the linen

besides. I shall not pretend to keep more than one pair of horses for a carriage, and one for a saddle. Secretaries, servants, wood, charities which are demanded as rights, and the million dittoes present such a prospect as is enough to disgust any one. Yet not one word must we say.

We cannot go back. We must stand our ground as long as we can. Dispose of our places with the help of our friend Dr. Tufts, as well as you can. We are impatient for news, but that is always so at this season.

I am tenderly your

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXXII.

Philadelphia, 9 February, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

THE die is cast,[1] and you must prepare yourself for honorable trials.

I must wait to know whether Congress will do any thing or not to furnish my house. If they do not, I will have no house before next fall, and then a very moderate one, with very moderate furniture.

[1] The votes for President and Vice President had been counted in the Senate on the preceding day, and it was Mr. Adams's duty, as Vice President, to announce himself the President elect. See Letters of Mrs. Adams, vol. II., p. 235.

The prisoners from Algiers arrived yesterday in this city, in good health and looking very well. Captain Stevens is among them. One woman rushed into the crowd and picked out her husband whom she had not seen for fourteen years.

I am, and ever shall be, yours and no other's,

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXXIII.

Philadelphia, 5 March, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

YOUR dearest friend never had a more trying day than yesterday.[1] A solemn scene it was indeed, and it was made more affecting to me by the presence of the General,[2] whose countenance was as serene and unclouded as the day. He seemed to me to enjoy a triumph over me. Methought I heard him say, "Ay! I am fairly out and you fairly in! See which of us will be happiest." When the ceremony was over, he came and made me a visit, and cordially congratulated me, and wished my administration might be happy, successful, and honorable.

It is now settled that I am to go into his house. It is whispered that he intends to take French leave to-

[1] The day of his inauguration as President.
[2] Washington.

morrow. I shall write you as fast as we proceed. My chariot is finished, and I made my first appearance in it yesterday. It is simple but elegant enough. My horses are young, but clever.

In the chamber of the House of Representatives was a multitude as great as the space could contain, and I believe scarcely a dry eye but Washington's. The sight of the sun setting full orbed, and another rising, though less splendid, was a novelty. Chief Justice Ellsworth administered the oath, and with great energy. Judges Cushing, Wilson, and Iredell, were present. Many ladies. I had not slept well the night before, and did not sleep well the night after. I was unwell and did not know whether I should get through or not. I did, however. How the business was received I know not, only I have been told that Mason, the treaty publisher, said we should lose nothing by the change, for he never heard such a speech in public in his life.

All agree that, taken altogether, it was the sublimest thing ever exhibited in America. I am, my dearest friend, most affectionately and kindly yours,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCLXXXIV.

Philadelphia, 9 March, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE no letter this week, and begin to fear that your respect to our late President has laid a foundation for a sick spring and summer. Sometimes, too, I am jealous of unfair play in the post office to prevent me from hearing from you at the most critical period of my life. The public papers must give you an account of proceedings which I am wholly unable to describe. What judgment is formed of my part in the late transactions by my friends or my enemies, I know not. There is a reserve in both, beyond my comprehension.

The President and Mrs. Washington go off this morning for Mount Vernon. Yesterday afternoon he came to make me his farewell visit, and requested me, in his own name and Mrs. W.'s, to present "*their respects*" to Mrs. Adams. I believe that I envied him more than he did me, and with reason. The house is to be cleared and cleaned, and I am to go into it on Monday next, if possible. I shall make a small establishment for myself, for the present, and wait your advice for ulterior arrangements. It is now generally understood that I am to go home before midsummer and bring my family in October. The business of all kinds, and writing particularly,

out of the habit of which I have been so long, press upon me very severely, and would endanger my health, if I did not make conscience of riding every day.

Mrs. Cushing will call upon you, and give you an account of what they call the inauguration. It is the general report that there was more weeping than there has ever been at the representation of any tragedy. But whether it was from grief or joy, whether from the loss of their beloved President, or from the accession of an unbeloved one, or from the pleasure of exchanging Presidents without tumult, or from the novelty of the thing, or from the sublimity of it arising from the multitude present, or whatever other cause, I know not. One thing I know, I am a being of too much sensibility to act any part well in such an exhibition. Perhaps there is little danger of my having such another scene to feel or behold.

The stillness and silence astonishes me. Every body talks of the tears, the full eyes, the streaming eyes, the trickling eyes, &c., but all is enigma beyond. No one descends to particulars to say why or wherefore; I am, therefore, left to suppose that it is all grief for the loss of their beloved. Two or three persons have ventured to whisper in my ear that my speech made an agreeable impression. I have ventured to say things both in that speech and in my farewell address to the Senate, so open to scoffs and sarcasms that I expected them in abundance. I have not yet seen any. The more may come. I have been so strangely used in this country, so belied and

so undefended, that I was determined to say some things as an appeal to posterity. Foreign nations and future times will understand them better than my enemies or friends will own they do.[1] The vanity and egotism which is so apparent, or at least to seeming, may be pardoned for what I know, lest satirical reflections on it, should provoke some one to produce proofs that if it is egotism, it is no vanity.

My dear wife, your society is invaluable to me, and yet I cannot enjoy it before July, I fear. All will depend upon public events. I shall come to you as soon as possible. I am, with an affection that can end only with my life, and I hope not then, your faithful friend and husband,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCLXXXV.

Philadelphia, 11 March, 1799.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

YESTERDAY only I received yours of March 1. I am surprised you should have received none from me from 11th February. I have written never less than once a week, seldom less than twice, and nine weeks out of ten three times, ever since I left you. The

[1] As this paragraph may inspire a curiosity to see these papers, they are placed in the Appendix to this volume, A.

roads, or some irregularity of the post, must have occasioned your disappointment. I hope you will obtain Mr. Mears, but I must leave every thing to you. The load of business that now compels my attention every day is such, that I cannot think a moment about my farm. Mr. Maund writes me that he has sent me a barrel of seed oats, of a superior quality, to Boston, by a Captain Allen, who was to sail in the beginning of March from Virginia. The family is gone. Mr. Lear and Mr. Dandridge remain, but it is a great work to arrange and clean the house. I can't get into it before the middle of next week. I hope Billings will sow the barley and grass seed well. What will become of my meadow cornfield I know not. However, I must leave that and all the rest to you, and I could not trust it better.

My aunt Vesey's death was unknown to me. I am very glad you went to the funeral. The feast that succeeded[1] was one of those things which are not much to my taste. I am glad you went. I went too. But these things give offence to the plain people of our country upon whose friendship I have always depended. They are practised by the elegant and the rich for their own ends, which are not always the best. If I could have my wish, there should never be a show or a feast made for the President while I hold the office. My birthday happens when Congress will never sit, so that I hope it will never be

[1] At Boston, on the anniversary of Washington's birthday.

talked of. These are hints, *entre nous*. I am, my dearest friend,

Ever yours,

JOHN ADAMS.

Washington has at last denounced the forged letters.

LETTER CCLXXXVI.

Philadelphia, 13 March, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I AM so constantly engaged in business, most of which is new to me, that it seems as if it was impossible to find time to write even to you; yet I believe I write every post.

It proves to be a tedious business to clear the President's house for me. I am now told it will not be ready this week. You will see by the Gazette how the new Pennsylvania house is disposed of. The weather is bad. I have a great cold. The news is not pleasant, and I have no society but statesmen. Mr. Jefferson has been here and is gone off to-day for Virginia. He is as he was.

I cannot write to you about any thing at home. You must do as you judge best. I like all that you have proposed to me. I must not write about public affairs. I must go to you or you must come to me. I cannot live without you till October. But all will

depend upon events and intelligence to come. My regards to the neighbors, duty to my mother, love to relations, &c. Oh! my poor meadow and wall, &c., &c., &c. It would do me good like a medicine to see Billings one hour at any sort of work.

I have no letter to-day, but I shall have one on Wednesday or Saturday. I find you don't forget your ever affectionate

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCLXXXVII.

Philadelphia, 17 March, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HOPE to get into the house on Monday next, but shall purchase no nice furniture till you come. I shall make a little establishment for myself and keep bachelors' hall for some time. I have procured some horses and a carriage, and ride on horseback as often as the weather will permit.

We have no authentic news from Europe. These long east winds may bring us something. I sent you the last letters from our sons dated about the middle of December. Mr. Murray is to go to Holland and Mr. Dandridge as his secretary, so that Thomas will come home directly, I hope. I would not even advise him to go to France. I hope to have one of my children near me. It would have given me great

pleasure to have had some of my family present at my inauguration, which was the most affecting and overpowering scene I ever acted in. I was very unwell, had no sleep the night before, and really did not know but I should have fainted in presence of all the world. I was in great doubt whether to say any thing or not besides repeating the oath. And now, the world is as silent as the grave. All the federalists seem to be afraid to approve any body but Washington. The Jacobin papers damn with faint praise, and undermine with misrepresentation and insinuation. If the federalists go to playing pranks, I will resign the office, and let Jefferson lead them to peace, wealth and power if he will.

From the situation where I now am, I see a scene of ambition beyond all my former suspicions or imaginations; an emulation which will turn our government topsy-turvy. Jealousies and rivalries have been my theme, and checks and balances as their antidotes till I am ashamed to repeat the words; but they never stared me in the face in such horrid forms as at present. I see how the thing is going. At the next election England will set up Jay or Hamilton, and France, Jefferson, and all the corruption of Poland will be introduced; unless the American spirit should rise and say, we will have neither John Bull nor Louis Baboon.

Silence.

Yours affectionately,

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXXVIII.

Philadelphia, 24 April, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

This day you promised me to begin your journey; but if the weather is as disagreeable with you as it is here, I could not exact the fulfilment of the engagement. I fear you will have bad roads and unpleasant weather. You talk of your perplexities and say you must get out of them yourself. Do you think mine less severe, public or private?

My dear and venerable mother! alas, I feel for her. She can compliment her daughter yet — that is a good sign. As to the husband, it seems to me that the mother and the daughter ought to think a little of the president as well as the husband. His cares! his anxieties! his health? Don't laugh. His comfort; that his head may be clear and his heart firm, ought to be thought on more than the husband. Provide every thing for my aged and worthy mother. I hope to see her yet again before October.

You, and such petit maitres and maitresses as you, are forever criticising the periods and diction of such great men as presidents and chief justices. Do you think their minds are taken up with such trifles? There is solid, keen, deep sense in that morsel of Ellsworth's. You ought to be punished for wishing it not published.

I warrant you, I shall soon be acquitted of the crime of Chronicle, Argus and Aurora praise. Let it run its rig, however, and say nothing at present. Your moral reflections on worldly possessions and earthly comforts, your look into futurity for brighter scenes and fairer prospects, are wise.

You can 't imagine what a man of business I am. How many papers I read and how much I write every day. I fear you will effeminate me when you come. I have determined to send my coachman and horses to Paulus Hook for you. As soon as I know the day you will be ready to get your coach over to the hook, I will endeavor to contrive that the horses shall be ready to be harnessed at your command. You will find the coachman very attentive, sober, skilful and obliging.

I am forever your

J. A.

LETTER CCLXXXIX.

Philadelphia, 4 May, 1797.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

YOUR letters of the 21, 22, 23, and 26th of April,[1] are all before me. They have inspired me with all the melancholy in which they were written. Our mother

[1] See the last of these letters among those of Mrs. Adams, vol. II., p. 236.

and our niece are gone to rest. The first a fruit fully ripe, the last but a blossom or a bud. I have suffered for you as much as you have suffered, but I could give you no aid, or amusement, or comfort. I pray God that these dispensations may be for our good. My mother's countenance and conversation was a source of enjoyment to me that is now dried up forever, at Quincy. Our ancestors are now all gone, and we are to follow them very soon to a country where there will be no war or rumor of war, no envy, jealousy, rivalry, or party.

You and I are now entering on a new scene, which will be the most difficult and least agreeable of any in our lives. I hope the burden will be lighter to both of us, when we come together.

I am, as long as life lasts, your ever affectionate

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCXC.

Philadelphia, 28 November, 1798.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE received yours of the 18th, and none later. Your company here is much desired by every body, but by none so much as me. My occupation in business is so incessant that I could have little time to pass with you, but that little every day would be precious and invaluable. You express a willingness to

come on; but the thought of attempting it without consulting your friends and physicians distresses and terrifies me lest it should prove fatal to a life that is dear to me beyond all expression. If, however, your physicians are of opinion that you can come on by easy journeys, in any way you can think of, your arrival here will be an inexpressible satisfaction to me. But if you attempt to come without a fixed resolution to take care of your health and renounce those fatigues of public places, drawing rooms, great dinners, &c., I am very apprehensive that this winter will be your last. A constitution so wrecked and exhausted as yours has been by a three months' confinement, may be easily overset.

We are all well and every thing goes on very well. We had the ministry and general officers to dine on Monday, and all agreeable.

I am, with tenderness inexpressible, ever yours,

J. A.

LETTER CCXCI.

Philadelphia, 13 December, 1798.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

Your letters of November 29, December 2 and 3, affect me very tenderly. The low spirits, effects of long and exhausting sickness are apparent; but these

are evils of a serious nature. I pray you to banish as much as possible all gloomy thoughts, and be very cautious to avoid every thing which may endanger a return of your old disorders.

To reconcile you to your fate, I have a great mind to give you a detail of mine. A peck of troubles in a large bundle of papers, often in a hand-writing almost illegible, comes every day from the office of ——, office of ——, office of ——, &c., &c., &c. Thousands of sea letters, Mediterranean passes, and commissions and patents to sign; no company — no society — idle, unmeaning ceremony, follies, extravagance, shiftlessness, and health sinking, for what I know, under my troubles and fatigues. You and I seem to have arrived prematurely at the age when there is no pleasure.

All this is not the resignation of Socrates.

I cannot encourage the idea of your coming on to Philadelphia. The horrid roads, and cold, damp weather, would put an end to you. I hope our dear son will arrive and cheer you up.

I am, with unalterable affection,

J. A.

LETTER CCXCII.

Philadelphia, 1 January, 1799.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I RECEIVED to-day your favor of the 24th, and it made the day more tolerable. Your health and spirits always promote mine.

We have had more company to-day than ever upon any occasion. Thirty or forty gallons of punch, wine in proportion and cake in abundance. The news by the America, Captain Jenkins, arrived at Newburyport, made every body gay but me. Not a word of T. B. A. I shall be uneasy till I hear further. He could not be so imprudent as to omit that opportunity.

You have an admirable faculty of employing your mind, and in the affairs of the farm, materials for it. I want my talkative wife, but fear, if she should attempt to come here, she would not talk farther than Worcester or Springfield. But my wife was too studious and addicted to scribbling, to talk much to me when she was here.

Our people grow amazingly fearless and valiant in proportion as they hear the English beat the French; and that formidable combinations are forming against them by Turkey, Russia, Austria, and England. I don't like this bravery which grows in proportion as danger appears to lessen. I like that fortitude which increases as danger grows, in a good cause. The

English have exhibited an amazing example of skill and intrepidity, perseverance and firmness at sea. We are a chip of that block, and we could do as we pleased, at least as we ought, upon the watery element, if it were not that we shall excite jealousy in the English navy. We must, however, stand for our right. We must adopt their motto, "Dieu et mon droit."

Yours forever and ever,

J. A.

LETTER CCXCIII.

Philadelphia, 25 January, 1799.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I AM as much of a solitudinarian as Frederick the Conqueror. He was constantly saying at sixty, "Je suis vieux, cassé, surannée," &c., &c., &c. I may say the same and have the honor to resemble him in this particular, but I shall never imitate his idolatry for Voltaire. His materialism appears to me very superficial. He insists upon being all matter, without knowing what matter is. The monades, the êtres simples, the atoms, the molecules organiques, all these guesses and fictions, are as nonsensical as the occult qualities. Human knowledge cannot penetrate so deep. I was profoundly learned in all that jargon

at twenty years of age, but found it all useless, and renounced it for fee simple and fee tail.

Thomas is my delight and I know not how to resign him; but as I know you will not be quite well till you see him, I shall consent to his going next week.

J. A.

LETTER CCXCIV.

Philadelphia, 4 February, 1799.

THE SOLITUDINARIAN OF MARKET STREET
TO HIS DEAREST FRIEND:

Yours of 25th ult. is received. Thomas is to set off from New York to-day for Quincy, and I wish him a pleasant journey, which the fine weather and convenient snow promises. A happy sight of his friends will come of course without accidents. He found his father forty years older than when he left him, and if he finds his mother advanced only ten, it may be an agreeable disappointment to him. But if we should live ten years longer, I suppose we shall begin, like the hero of Prussia, to think ourselves young, at least not old. I rejoice that President Willard is restored to his family, friends, and the public. Mr. Gerry has seen the communication and the annotations. I should be glad to know the public opinion of both. I shall not commit to writing any remarks

upon the conduct of such great men as ministers of state and ambassadors. I agree with you that voluble old women or handsome young ones are the best ambassadors to some courts and governments. I wish some power or other would send you to me in the first character.

Tell Mr. Porter that I wish to have the best manure upon the hill, and enough of it to give the land a good dressing.

J. A.

LETTER CCXCV.

Philadelphia, 23 February, 1799.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I WENT last night to the ball, where the company suffered more by the cold, which was excessive, than I ever knew any company suffer in my life. The dancers only were comfortable. I came home and went into a warm bed and had a fine perspiration, occasioned, I believe, by my drinking three glasses of Madeira wine at supper, and two more after I came home, which has relieved me from all cold and I feel very well this morning. The company, owing to the weather, was not large.

I am very anxious to hear from you, having no letter since the 10th. Your sickness last summer, fall, and winter, has been to me the severest trial I ever

endured. Not that I am at this moment without other trials enough for one man. I may adopt the words of a celebrated statesman, whom, however, I should not wish to resemble in many things: "And now, good judge," says he, "let me ask you whether you believe that my situation in the world is perfectly as I could wish it; whether you imagine that I meet with no shock from my superiors, no perverseness from my equals, no impertinence from my inferiors? If you fancy me in such a state of bliss you are wide from the mark."

I have planned out so much work for myself that I shall not be able to go eastward till some time after the rising of Congress. But every day will seem long. I am, my dearest friend,

Yours forever,

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCXCVI.

Trenton, 25 *October*, 1799.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I AM favored this morning with yours of the 22d. This is accession day, you know. I shall always consider it as a red letter day; a fortunate day.[1] I

[1] The anniversary of his marriage.

am happy to know that you are comfortably situated. I am pretty well recovered of my cold, but it has reduced my flesh. James has found a beautiful pair of black horses, a perfect match for ours, and is distracted to persuade me to buy them. One is six years old, the other eight. I think with you that the second week in November will be soon enough for us to enter the city. I am looking out for Briesler now every day. You alone might possibly live here with me for a week; but L. and B. could not be accommodated. You might all be well at Van Tilsburg's, but I think it will not be worth your while to leave your present situation. When Briesler comes on I shall write you more particularly.

The next winter will be the last we shall ever spend in Philadelphia. You will leave it early in April if you are wise, and you will come no more to the southward for one year and a half at least. You will never think of going to Georgetown upon uncertainties, or rather upon the certainty of leaving it on the fourth of March, with five hundred and fifty or six hundred miles to ride through the mud. An election is approaching which will set us at liberty from these uncomfortable journeys. I am, as for thirty-five years I have been,

J. A.

LETTER CCXCVII.

Trenton, 27 October, 1799.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I HAVE received yours of 24th, and thank you for your relation of our little domestic affairs at Quincy. Briesler did not arrive last night, as you calculated. His children may detain him longer than you expected. Some of the public offices are about removing to Philadelphia this week. I can send James with my horses and chariot to meet you at Hoboken ferry or Elizabethtown, or any other place you may appoint, and at any time you will appoint, if you can be sure of your plans and measures.

I have been, forenoon and afternoon, to church to hear Parson Waddell, who gave us two discourses good and wholesome for soul, body, and estate. He is a good picture of "stalled theology," and is said to have a good estate. Last Sunday I went to the Presbyterian church and heard Mr. Grant, an ingenious young gentleman. There is something more cheerful and comfortable in an Episcopalian than in a Presbyterian church. I admire a great part of the Divine service at church very much. It is very humane and benevolent, and sometimes pathetic and affecting, but rarely gloomy, if ever. Their creeds I could dispense with very well, because the Scriptures being before us contain the creed the most cer-

tainly orthodox. But you know I never write nor talk upon divinity. I have had more than I could do of humanity. Benevolence and beneficence, industry, equity and humanity, resignation and submission, repentance and reformation, are the essence of my religion. Alas! how weakly and imperfectly have I fulfilled the duties of my own religion! I look back upon a long life very poorly spent in my own estimation. Busy as it has appeared to some, to me it appears to have been very much too idle, inactive, slothful, and sluggish. I fear it is too late to amend. My forces are far spent, and by too much exertion I should soon exhaust them all. I am not in the vapors, but in very good spirits, notwithstanding this penitent confession of my faults.

Write me every day.

J. A.

LETTER CCXCVIII.

Washington, 13 June, 1800.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

I RECEIVED your favor of the 2d by Mr. Dexter, and this morning from Mr. Gerry an account of your health on the 4th, which have relieved me from some anxiety, as I had received no letter from you since you were in New York.

I have seen many cities and fine places since you

left me, and particularly Mount Vernon. Mrs. Washington and her whole family very kindly inquired after your health and all your children, and sent many friendly greetings. I like the seat of government very well, and shall sleep or lie awake next winter in the President's house.[1] I have slept very well on my journey, and been pretty well. An abundance of company and many tokens of respect have attended my journey, and my visit here is well received. Mr. Marshall and Mr. Dexter lodge with me at Tunnicliff's City Hotel, very near the capitol.[2] The establishment of the public offices in this place has given it the air of the seat of government, and all things seem to go on well.

I am particularly pleased with Alexandria. Mr. Lee lives very elegantly, neatly and agreeably there, among his sisters and friends, and among his fine lots of clover and timothy. I scarcely know a more eligible situation. Oh! that I could have a home! But this felicity has never been permitted me. Rolling, rolling, rolling, till I am very near rolling into the bosom of mother earth.

I am, as ever, your affectionate husband,

J. Adams.

[1] Mr. Adams made a short visit to Washington at this time when it was about to become the seat of government.

[2] Messrs. Marshall, Dexter, and Lee, were of his cabinet.

LETTER CCXCIX.

President's House, Washington city,
2 November, 1800.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

We arrived here last night, or rather yesterday, at one o'clock, and here we dined and slept. The building is in a state to be habitable, and now we wish for your company. The account you give of the melancholy state of our dear brother Mr. Cranch and his family, is really distressing, and must severely afflict you. I most cordially sympathize with you and them.

I have seen only Mr. Marshall and Mr. Stoddert, General Wilkinson and the two commissioners, Mr. Scott and Mr. Thornton. I shall say nothing of public affairs. I am very glad you consented to come on, for you would have been more anxious at Quincy than here, and I, to all my other solicitudines mordaces, as Horace calls them, i. e., "biting cares," should have added a great deal on your account. Besides, it is fit and proper that you and I should retire together, and not one before the other. Before I end my letter, I pray heaven to bestow the best of blessings on this house, and on all that shall hereafter inhabit it. May none but honest and wise men ever rule under this roof! I shall not attempt a description of it. You will form the best idea of it from inspection.

Mr. Briesler is very anxious for the arrival of the man and women, and I am much more so for that of the ladies. I am, with unabated confidence and affection, your

JOHN ADAMS.

LETTER CCC.

Washington, 16 February, 1801.

MY DEAREST FRIEND,

SATURDAY night, nine o'clock, and not before, I received yours of 13th,[1] and the letter to Thomas with it, brought here no doubt by mistake. I regret very much that you have not a gentleman with you. The skittish young colt with you is always timorous, but no harm will befall you or her, I trust. The weather and roads here on Saturday, Sunday, and to-day, are the finest we have seen this year.

The election will be decided this day in favor of Mr. Jefferson, as it is given out by good authority.

The burden upon me in nominating judges and consuls and other officers, in delivering over the furniture, in the ordinary business at the close of a session, and in preparing for my journey of five hundred

[1] Mrs. Adams left Washington at this time. Mr. Adams followed on the fourth of the next month. The correspondence closes here.

miles through the mire, is and will be very heavy. My time will be all taken up. I pray you to continue to write me. My anxiety for you is a very distressing addition to all my other labors.

Our bishop gave us a good discourse yesterday, and every body inquired after you. I was able to tell them you had arrived on Friday night at Baltimore. I sleep the better for having the shutters open, and all goes on well. I pray God to bless and preserve you.

I give a feast to-day to Indian kings and aristocrats.

Ever

J. A.

APPENDIX.

A. — p. 248.

EXTRACT FROM THE JOURNAL OF THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, 15TH FEBRUARY, 1797.

After the consideration of the executive business, a motion was made that the Senate now adjourn; when the Vice President addressed them as follows:

GENTLEMEN OF THE SENATE,

If, in the general apprehension of an intention to retire in that most eminent citizen, to whom all eyes had been directed, and all hearts attracted as the centre of our union for so long a period, the public opinion had exhibited any clear indications of another in whom our fellow-citizens could have generally united; as soon as I read that excellent address, which announced the necessity of deliberation in the choice of a President, I should have imitated the example of a character, with which I had coöperated, though in less conspicuous and important stations, and maintained an uninterrupted friendship

for two and twenty years. But as a number of characters, appeared to stand in the general estimation so nearly on a level, as to render it difficult to conjecture, on which the majority would fall; considering the relation in which I stood to the people of America, I thought it most respectful to them, and most conducive to the tranquillity of the public mind to resign myself with others, a silent spectator of the general deliberation and a passive subject of public discussions.

Deeply penetrated with gratitude to my countrymen in general, for their long continued kindness to me, and for that steady and affecting confidence, with which, those who have most intimately known me, from early life, have on so many great occasions, entrusted to me, the care, of their dearest interests; since a majority of their electors, though a very small one, have declared in my favor, and since, in a republican government, the majority though ever so small must of necessity decide, I have determined, at every hazard of a high but just responsibility, though with much anxiety and diffidence, once more to engage in their service. Their confidence, which has been the chief consolation of my life, is too precious and sacred a deposit ever to be considered lightly. As it has been founded only on the qualities of the heart, it never has been, it never can be, deceived, betrayed or forfeited by me.

It is with reluctance, and with all those emotions of gratitude and affection, which a long experience of your goodness ought to inspire, that I now retire from my seat in this house and take my leave of the members of the Senate.

I ought not to declare, for the last time, your adjournment, before I have presented to every senator present, and to every citizen who has ever been a senator of the United States, my thanks, for the candor and favor inva-

riably received from them all. It is a recollection of which nothing can ever deprive me, and it will be a source of comfort to me, through the remainder of my life, that, as on the one hand, in a government constituted like ours, I have for eight years held the second situation under the Constitution of the United States, in perfect and uninterrupted harmony with the first, without envy in one, or jealousy in the other: so on the other hand I have never had the smallest misunderstanding with any member of the Senate. In all the abstruse questions, difficult conjunctures, dangerous emergencies, and animated debates upon the great interests of our country, which have so often and so deeply impressed all our minds, and interested the strongest feelings of the heart, I have experienced a uniform politeness and respect from every quarter of the house. When questions of no less importance than difficulty, have produced a difference of sentiment (and differences of opinion will always be found in free assemblies of men, and probably the greatest diversities upon the greatest questions) when the senators have been equally divided, and my opinion has been demanded according to the constitution, I have constantly found, in that moiety of the senators, from whose judgment I have been obliged to dissent, a disposition to allow me, the same freedom of deliberation, and independence of judgment, which they asserted for themselves.

Within these walls, for a course of years, I have been an admiring witness of a succession of information, eloquence, patriotism and independence, which, as they would have done honor to any senate in any age, afford a consolatory hope (if the legislatures of the States are equally careful in their future selections, which there is no reason to distrust,) that no council more permanent than this, as a branch of the legislature will be necessary, to defend the rights, liberties and properties of the peo-

ple, and to protect the constitution of the United States, as well as the constitutions and rights of the individual States, against errors of judgment, irregularities of the passions or other encroachments of human infirmity, or more reprehensible enterprize, in the executive on one hand, or the more immediate representatives of the people on the other.

These considerations will all conspire to animate me in my future course, with a confident reliance, that as far as my conduct shall be uniformly measured by the constitution of the United States, and faithfully directed to the public good, I shall be supported by the Senate, as well as by the House of Representatives, and the people at large; and on no other conditions ought any support at all to be expected or desired.

With cordial wishes for your honor, health, and happiness, and fervent prayers for a continuation of the virtues, liberties, prosperity and peace of our beloved country, I avail myself of your leave of absence for the remainder of the session.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES, 4TH MARCH, 1797.

When it was first perceived, in early times, that no middle course for America remained, between unlimited submission to a foreign legislature, and a total independence of its claims; men of reflection were less apprehensive of danger from the formidable power of fleets and armies, they must determine to resist, than from those contests and dissensions, which would certainly arise, concerning the forms of government to be instituted, over

the whole, and over the parts of this extensive country. Relying, however, on the purity of their intentions, the justice of their cause, and the integrity and intelligence of the people, under an over-ruling Providence which had so signally protected this country from the first, the representatives of this nation, then consisting of little more than half its present numbers, not only broke to pieces the chains which were forging, and the rod of iron that was lifted up, but frankly cut asunder the ties which had bound them, and launched into an ocean of uncertainty.

The zeal and ardor of the people, during the revolutionary war, supplying the place of government, commanded a degree of order sufficient, at least, for the temporary preservation of society. The confederation, which was early felt to be necessary, was prepared from the models of the Batavian and Helvetic confederacies, the only examples which remain, with any detail and precision, in history, and certainly the only ones, which the people at large had ever considered. But, reflecting on the striking difference in so many particulars, between this country and those where a courier may go from the seat of government to the frontier in a single day, it was then certainly foreseen by some who assisted in Congress at the formation of it, that it could not be durable.

Negligence of its regulations, inattention to its recommendations, if not disobedience to its authority, not only in individuals but in States, soon appeared, with their melancholy consequences; universal languor, jealousies, rivalries of States; decline of navigation and commerce; discouragement of necessary manufactures; universal fall in the value of lands and their produce; contempt of public and private faith; loss of consideration and credit with foreign nations; and, at length, in discontents, ani-

mosities, combinations, partial conventions, and insurrection; threatening some great national calamity.

In this dangerous crisis the people of America were not abandoned by their usual good sense, presence of mind, resolution, or integrity. Measures were pursued to concert a plan, to form a more perfect union, establish justice, ensure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty. The public disquisitions, discussions, and deliberations, issued in the present happy constitution of government.

Employed in the service of my country abroad, during the whole course of these transactions, I first saw the Constitution of the United States in a foreign country. Irritated by no literary altercation, animated by no public debate, heated by no party animosity, I read it with great satisfaction, as a result of good heads, prompted by good hearts; as an experiment, better adapted to the genius, character, situation, and relations of this nation and country, than any which had ever been proposed or suggested. In its general principles and great outlines, it was conformable to such a system of government as I had ever most esteemed, and in some States, my own native State in particular, had contributed to establish. Claiming a right of suffrage in common with my fellow citizens, in the adoption or rejection of a constitution, which was to rule me and my posterity, as well as them and theirs, I did not hesitate to express my approbation of it, on all occasions, in public and in private. It was not then nor has been since, any objection to it, in my mind, that the Executive and Senate were not more permanent. Nor have I entertained a thought of promoting any alteration in it, but such as the people themselves, in the course of their experience, should see and feel to be ne-

cessary or expedient, and by their representatives in Congress and the State legislatures, according to the constitution itself, adopt and ordain.

Returning to the bosom of my country, after a painful separation from it, for ten years, I had the honor to be elected to a station under the new order of things, and I have repeatedly laid myself under the most serious obligations to support the constitution. The operation of it has equalled the most sanguine expectations of its friends; and, from an habitual attention to it, satisfaction in its administration, and delight in its effects upon the peace, order, prosperity, and happiness of the nation, I have acquired an habitual attachment to it, and veneration for it.

What other form of government, indeed, can so well deserve our esteem and love?

There may be little solidity in an ancient idea, that congregations of men into cities and nations, are the most pleasing objects in the sight of superior intelligencies: but this is very certain, that to a benevolent human mind there can be no spectacle presented by any nation, more pleasing, more noble, majestic, or august, than an assembly like that which has so often been seen in this and the other chamber of Congress; of a government, in which the executive authority, as well as that of all the branches of the legislature, are exercised by citizens selected at regular periods by their neighbors, to make and execute laws for the general good. Can any thing essential, any thing more than mere ornament and decoration, be added to this by robes or diamonds? Can authority be more amiable or respectable, when it descends from accidents or institutions established in remote antiquity, than when it springs fresh from the hearts and judgments of an honest and enlightened people? For, it is the people only that are represented: it is their power and majesty that

is reflected, and only for their good, in every legitimate government, under whatever form it may appear. The existence of such a government as ours, for any length of time, is a full proof of a general dissemination of knowledge and virtue throughout the whole body of the people. And what object of consideration more pleasing than this can be presented to the human mind? If national pride is ever justifiable or excusable, it is when it springs, not from power or riches, grandeur or glory, but from conviction of national innocence, information and benevolence.

In the midst of these pleasing ideas, we should be unfaithful to ourselves, if we should ever lose sight of the danger to our liberties, if any thing partial or extraneous should infect the purity of our free, fair, virtuous and independent elections. If an election is to be determined by a majority of a single vote, and that can be procured by a party, through artifice or corruption, the government may be the choice of a party, for its own ends, not of the nation, for the national good. If that solitary suffrage can be obtained by foreign nations, by flattery or menaces; by fraud or violence; by terror, intrigue, or venality; the government may not be the choice of the American people, but of foreign nations. It may be foreign nations who govern us, and not we, the people, who govern ourselves. And candid men will acknowledge, that in such cases choice would have little advantage to boast of over lot or chance.

Such is the amiable and interesting system of government (and such are some of the abuses to which it may be exposed) which the people of America have exhibited, to the admiration and anxiety of the wise and virtuous of all nations, for eight years; under the administration of a citizen, who, by a long course of great actions, regulated by prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude; conducting

a people, inspired with the same virtues, and animated with the same ardent patriotism and love of liberty, to independence and peace, to increasing wealth and unexampled prosperity; has merited the gratitude of his fellow-citizens, commanded the highest praises of foreign nations, and secured immortal glory with posterity.

In that retirement which is his voluntary choice, may he long live to enjoy the delicious recollection of his services, the gratitude of mankind, the happy fruits of them to himself and the world which are daily increasing, and that splendid prospect of the future fortunes of his country, which is opening from year to year. His name may be still a rampart, and the knowledge that he lives a bulwark, against all open or secret enemies of his country's peace.

This example has been recommended to the imitation of his successors, by both houses of Congress, and by the voice of the legislatures and the people, throughout the nation.

On this subject it might become me better to be silent, or to speak with diffidence; but, as something may be expected, the occasion, I hope, will be admitted as an apology, if I venture to say, that, if a preference upon principle of a free republican government, formed upon long and serious reflection, after a diligent and impartial inquiry after truth; if an attachment to the constitution of the United States, and a conscientious determination to support it, until it shall be altered by the judgments and wishes of the people, expressed in the mode prescribed in it; if a respectful attention to the constitutions of the individual States, and a constant caution and delicacy towards the State governments; if an equal and impartial regard to the rights, interests, honor, and happiness of all the States in the union, without preference or regard to a northern or southern, eastern or western position, their

various political opinions on essential points, or their personal attachments; if a love of virtuous men of all parties and denominations; if a love of science and letters, and a wish to patronize every rational effort to encourage schools, colleges, universities, academies, and every institution for propagating knowledge, virtue, and religion among all classes of the people, not only for their benign influence on the happiness of life, in all its stages and classes, and of society in all its forms, but as the only means of preserving our constitution from its natural enemies, the spirit of sophistry, the spirit of party, the spirit of intrigue, profligacy, and corruption, and the pestilence of foreign influence, which is the angel of destruction to elective governments; if a love of equal laws, of justice and humanity, in the interior administration; if an inclination to improve agriculture, commerce, and manufactures for necessity, convenience, and defence; if a spirit of equity and humanity, towards the aboriginal nations of America, and a disposition to meliorate their condition, by inclining them to be more friendly to us, and our citizens to be more friendly to them; if an inflexible determination to maintain peace and inviolable faith with all nations, and that system of neutrality and impartiality among the belligerent powers of Europe, which has been adopted by the government, and so solemnly sanctioned by both houses of Congress, and applauded by the legislatures of the States and the public opinion, until it shall be otherwise ordained by Congress; if a personal esteem for the French nation, formed in a residence of seven years, chiefly among them, and a sincere desire to preserve the friendship which has been so much for the honor and interest of both nations; if, while the conscious honor and integrity of the people of America, and the internal sentiment of their own power and energies must be preserved, an earnest endeavor to investigate every

just cause, and remove every colorable pretence, of complaint; if an intention to pursue, by amicable negotiation, a reparation for the injuries that have been committed on the commerce of our fellow-citizens by whatever nation, and (if success cannot be obtained) to lay the facts before the legislature, that they may consider what further measures the honor and interest of the government and its constituents demand; if a resolution to do justice, as far as may depend upon me, at all times, and to all nations, and maintain peace, friendship and benevolence with all the world; if an unshaken confidence in the honor, spirit, and resources of the American people, on which I have so often hazarded my all, and never been deceived; if elevated ideas of the high destinies of this country, and of my own duties towards it, founded on a knowledge of the moral principles and intellectual improvements of the people, deeply engraven on my mind in early life, and not obscured, but exalted by experience and age; — and with humble reverence I feel it my duty to add, if a veneration for the religion of a people, who profess and call themselves Christians, and a fixed resolution to consider a decent respect for Christianity, among the best recommendations for the public service; — can enable me, in any degree to comply with your wishes, it shall be my strenuous endeavor, that this sagacious injunction of the two houses shall not be without effect.

With this great example before me; with the sense and spirit, the faith and honor, the duty and interest of the same American people, pledged to support the constitution of the United States, I entertain no doubt of its continuance in all its energy; and my mind is prepared without hesitation, to lay myself under the most solemn obligations to support it, to the utmost of my power.

And may that Being who is supreme over all, the patron

of order, the fountain of justice, and the protector in all ages of the world, of virtuous liberty, continue his blessing upon this nation and its government and give it all possible success and duration, consistent with the ends of his providence.

JOHN ADAMS.

END OF VOL. II.

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